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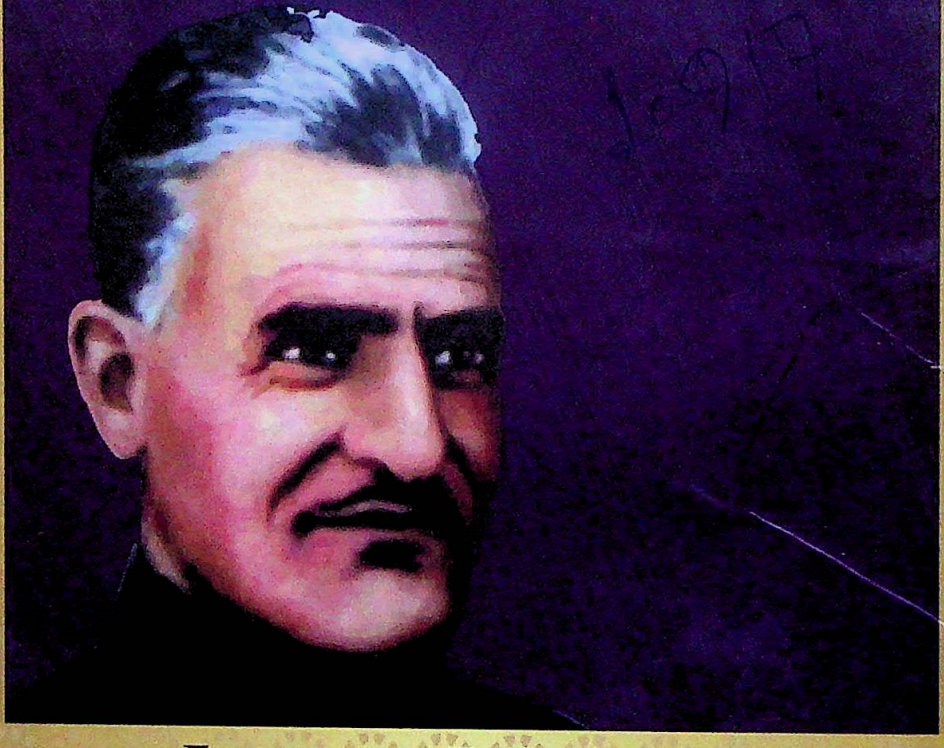
# The Inscrutable Art of Translation

## A Journey into

# Mahjoor

*The Poet of Kashmir*



FURRUKH FAIZAN MIR

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The present work is an attempt to make a comparative study of a considerable number of Mahjoor's notable Kashmiri poems and the English rendering thereof by two well-known scholars, namely, Shri T. N. Kaul and Shri Trilokinath Raina.

A striking feature of the poetry in point, apart from its aesthetic charm, is the fact that it is deeply embedded in the Kashmiri people's particular modes of life and their distinct culture and history. Evidently, translation of such poetry is bound to come across difficulties born of the social and literary distinctions peculiar to the Kashmiri and English languages.

Herein, each poem selected is dealt with under three separate analytical headings: thematic, structural and comparative. Effort has also been made to mark the fidelity or freedom exercised by the two translators while presenting a Kashmiri poet to an English–knowing readership.

Besides, the author has tried to evaluate the English versions in question as pieces of creative writing as they stand in themselves.

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## About the Author

Furrukh Faizan Mir teaches Literature in Translation and Poetry Courses in the Department of English, University of Kashmir. She obtained her M A, M Phil and B Ed degrees from the University of Kashmir. The author is presently pursing Ph D in the Department of English. Besides, this her several research papers have found place in journals of international repute.

## About the book

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# Foreword

The Kashmiri language, in view of its rich history, has been a source of translations even during pre-historic times. We know that Nag Sein's book *Millando Pinhoo* was translated during those very times. Nag Sein was a Kashmiri scholar hailing from Padder, Kishtwar, where a valley is still known as Nag Seini. Nag Sein translated the book for a Greek prince, Menander, who ruled Kashmir from Shakkala, the present day Sialkot, situated just a few miles away from Jammu (and is at present a part of northern Pakistan). Though the original book is lost, its translations in English and many other languages are extant in plenty. Similarly, a German scholar, Burkhard, translated Mahmood Gami's *Yusuf Zulaikha* in his native German, and the translation is extant. Recently, translations of various Kashmiri books have gathered greater momentum.

Mahjoor, a pioneering figure of Kashmiri renaissance, has been a fortunate poet. He is the only Kashmiri to date who received a state funeral. He is also the lone Kashmiri man of letters who was honoured by the Union Government by issuing a postal stamp bearing his picture. The stamp was issued by no less a person than the then Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh, at a glittering function.

As pointed out by the gifted author of the present book, Miss Furrukh Faizan Mir, Mahjoor remains one of the most

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popular poets of the Kashmiri language. He played a seminal role in the upliftment of the ancient and magnificent mother tongue of the Kashmiri people. He has been enjoying wide readership in his motherland, and now he is being projected to the non-Kashmiri speaking world. Two good English translations of some of his selected poems have already appeared. Through the present work, Miss Furrukh Faizan Mir has assessed, analysed and evaluated these translations in a very lucid and eloquent manner. Even at her tender age, she has underlined like a mature critic merits as well as deficiencies of the two translations in point. What is more, she has devoted a full chapter talking about the art of translation with such aplomb that many lovers of Kashmiri will find it informative as well as illuminating. I am reminded of a comment of Swami Vivekanand about the art of translating poetry. He says: "It is the reverse of a beautiful Kashmiri shawl—front one being extremely charming whereas the reverse one displaying just awkward and irregular trappings of some thread work".

Miss Mir's book under review is a very fine example of literary writings of our talented young generation of writers. She seems to have inherited in her blood a deep understanding of the Kashmiri language and its poetry, being a grand-daughter of the greatest living Kashmiri writer and poet, Prof. Rahman Rahi, I feel elevated to appreciate and compliment Miss Furrukh for her excellent effort. The book will put Mahjoor on a higher pedestal and enhance knowledge about him amongst the English-knowing people. It will also serve the cause of our ancient but largely underestimated Kashmiri literature.

Kudos to Miss Furrukh Faizan Mir!

**Mohd Yusuf Taing**

**Wazarat Road, Jammu**

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# Introduction

Mahjoor is one of the most prominent pioneers of modern Kashmiri poetry. He remains a household name in the whole of Kashmir and is known as 'The Poet of Kashmir'. Born in a religiously respected Muslim family—known as Peerzada family—on August 11, 1887 at Mitrigaam, a picturesque village of the valley of Kashmir, he was named Ghulam Ahmad Peerzada. The boy received his earlier education from his father, Peer Abdullah Shah, a Persian and Arabic scholar and a village *Maulvi* (preacher) by profession. Later on, he was sent to a *maktab* (religious school) in the neighbouring township of Tral where his association with Abdul Ghani Aashaq, an able Kashmiri poet and scholar, kindled his imagination and aroused in him a burning passion for writing poetry.

While his orthodox father wanted him to follow his priestly profession, the boy had different interests. Abhorring the possibility of a mantle of peer falling on his young shoulders, he thought of an escapade from the valley. One day, in the winter of 1905, he quickly slipped away and reached Amritsar, a city in the Punjab. Those days Amritsar would hum with literary activities. Being an intelligent young man and a fine calligra-

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pher, Mahjoor easily found an employment as a copyist in a local newspaper while spending his spare time versifying in Urdu and Persian. It was during these days that he got a golden opportunity of meeting a few well-known Urdu poets of the day, like Maulana Bismil and Alama Shibli. It was here that he adopted 'Mahjoor' as his poetic pseudonym.

The turning point in Mahjoor's career came in the first decade of the 20th century when he was invited to a poetic symposium where he recited one of his Urdu poems which was not received well by the audience. The bitterness he felt that moment made him realize that Urdu or Persian was not the right medium for his poetic expression. Consequently, he bade good-bye to Urdu and Persian and, instead, turned to his mother tongue, Kashmiri. Shortly after his return from the Punjab, Mahjoor got a job as a patwari in the Govt. Revenue Department. In his capacity as a patwari, he got the opportunity to spend many a year in various parts of the State including the frontier regions of Leh and Kargil. As a result of his stay at various places in the valley, he came in close contact with the common Kashmiri people, learning their woes and wishes, appreciating the beauty of Kashmir folk-poetry and folk-lore and the richness and sweetness of the Kashmiri language.

According to *Kashmiri Zaban Aur Shairi* (1984), it was in 1923 that Mahjoor for the first time felt the urge to write in Kashmiri. However, it was in 1926 that he heard a melodious song of Habba Khatoon sung by a group of Kashmiri peasant women collecting fire wood from a nearby forest. Mahjoor felt so enchanted by the song that he decided to compose a parallel song expressing feminine feelings and sentiments. This gave birth to one of his most famous lyrics, *pose mate janaanoo*. It was this lyric which established him as a notable Kashmiri poet. Azad (1984), quoting Davinder Sethyarthy (a disciple of Tagore), says that "the lyric in point impelled the great Benga-

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li poet, Rabindernath Tagore, to praise Mahjoor and to opine that Kashmir was really a cradle for poetry". The lyric was followed by a chain of melodiously bewitching songs like *baghi nishai key gulo, tamana chaani deedarukh, sozi-dil boz wan hareyey, kyah malaale rot janaanan*, etc., which earned him the love of the common Kashmiris and also the esteem of the learned ones.

The period from 1931-1945 may be described as the most productive period of Mahjoor's poetic career. After his retirement from government service in 1945, he spent the rest of his days at his native village. Mahjoor was the first Kashmiri poet to earn a special scholarship from the Government of J&K on the 8th of April 1952. Only a day after, he received the first installment of the scholarship, he breathed his last on account of brain hemorrhage and was buried at his ancestral graveyard at Mitrigaam. In order to offer his tribute to the poet, the then Prime Minister of J & K State, Bakhshi Ghulam Muhammed, visited Mitrigaam personally and suggested that the poet's body should be exhumed and buried afresh at a place called Athwajan, (a place commonly believed to be the birth place of Habba Khatoon) in Srinagar, near the river bank of Jhelum. This took place on 11 April 1952. The funeral procession of the poet started from one of the most sacred shrines in Kashmir, Khawnakhai Maula, and the body was laid to rest with full state honour.

Scholars like M.Y. Taing (1992) and T. N. Kaul (1988) have compiled a complete list of Mahjoor's works, both published and unpublished. Out of these, the present book will confine only to the following two most important collections of his poems:

1. *Kalaam-i-Mahjoor:* A published work of Mahjoor in Kashmiri which consists of 12 booklets including 73 love songs and lyrics.

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2. *Payaam-i-Mahjoor:* A published work of Mahjoor in Kashmiri comprising 6 booklets covering patriotic songs and poems of social and political nature.

In order to make a comparative study of a few poems selected from the above mentioned two collections and their English translations, selection has been made of two translators, namely, T.N. Kaul and Trilokinath Raina. The two translators invite attention, firstly, on account of the quantity of their translations of Mahjoor's poetry because nobody else has attempted to translate into English as many poems of Mahjoor as they have. Secondly, both of them being Kashmiris by birth and having spent a major period of their lives in Kashmir, they can be expected to appreciate the niceties of the Kashmiri language. What is more, both have remained professionally associated with the English language. Trilokinath Raina worked as a Professor of English at the National Defense Academy, Khadakvasla. His translations from Kashmiri have been published from time to time in *The Visvabharati Quarterly, Poetry India* and *Poetry Eastwest.* As for Kaul, he has for a considerable time worked on the editorial staff of the two leading dailies of India namely, *The Times of India* and *The Hindustan Times* and has also to his credit several articles on Kashmiri literature and a number of English translations of Kashmiri essays.

The present work comprises three main chapters, each touching upon one or the other notable aspect of the subject as follows:

In Chapter I entitled "The Art of Translation: Inherently Impossible yet Unavoidable" an attempt will be made to define translation and briefly trace its history and discuss the difficulties of translation encountered generally and particularly when dealing with poetry.

In Chapter II entitled "Ghulam Ahmed Mahjoor: The

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Poet of Kashmir" an attempt will be made to place Mahjoor in the history of Kashmiri poetry, and underline the poet's contribution as a harbinger of a sort of renaissance in Kashmiri poetry. Thus, attracting attention of various translators the chapter will further include a brief description of the various translations of Mahjoor attempted in different languages. The translations attempted by Kaul and Raina, being the most voluminous attempts of translating Mahjoor into English and also being the central subject of our study, due note will be taken of the two translators' purpose in selecting Mahjoor for their renderings.

Chapter III entitled "A Comparative study of the Original Kashmiri and its English Renderings" may be described as the core and kernel of the whole study undertaken herein. This chapter will attempt a thorough comparative study of the two English translations compared with the original Kashmiri as well as with each other.

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# Translating Poetry

Poetry translation is
a transmigration.
As a fish, dives through water
the translator moves through
minds. On the bank of
each word, in the thick sand,
he kneels, studying
the colour of each shell,
blowing each conch.

Poetry translation is
the embarrassing head
transposal of the Vikramaditya
Tales. The translator
supports another poet's
head on his trunk. Each line
is a lane worn out with
war, misery and boredom.
A bylane of music along which
parade immortal men, gods
and trees. An abyss opens
where a line ends. The souls
of the dead quench their thirst
in that pool of silence.

O, those who come this way,
please take off your shoes

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And leave your garments here.
You must sneak through naked
like the wind in the valley.

One day I dreamt of myself
translating my poetry
into my own language.

All of us translate each poem
into our own private language
and then we quarrel over the meanings.

It seems to me that the Babel
will never be complete.

K. Satchidanandan
(A noted South-Indian poet)

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# Chapter – I

## The Art of Translation: Inherently Impossible yet Unavoidable

Translation is a human activity of great antiquity. Long before the invention of writing, whenever linguistically divergent groups of early people happened to come in contact with one another, communication between them must have been facilitated by bilinguals who acted as interpreters. In the twenty-first century with thousands of languages in the world, and ever increasing international communication, translation has become an extremely important activity.

The history of translation is the history of a long chain of efforts for making mutual understanding possible by means of interpretation and translation for the people using different languages. Leaving aside the oral interpretations, literary translation has, with the passage of time, been assuming more and more importance. There was a time when literary translation was considered as a secondary activity, mechanical rather than creative and not worthy of any serious critical attention. During the previous century, however, literary translation has been drawing great public and academic interest. There have been great writers who hold the opinion that translation of creative literature is inherently impossible but unavoidable--im-

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possible in view of various hurdles involved in translation and unavoidable because, as a human activity, one needs to understand and appreciate the intellectual as well as the emotional life of people speaking languages other than their own.

Joshua (2002) states that till the early ninety-sixties there were no translation centres or associations of literary translators, but as days went by, efforts of translators began to be rewarded and the growth and acceptance of literary translations increased. In spite of the progress of translation work, negative assumptions about translation still continued. However, the emergence of modern theories of translation led to a better understanding of translation.

Notwithstanding the fact that translation was considered as a secondary work, serious traces of translation could be seen right from 3000 B.C. The most ancient translated work is that of Rosetta Stone of second century B.C. Then came Livius Andronicus of 240 B.C., who translated Homer's *Odyssey* into Latin. Scholars like Quintilian, Cicero, Horace, Catallus and Younger Pliny gave serious attention to the problems of translation and produced different theories. Of these, Cicero and Horace greatly influenced the later generations of translators. It is they who initiated the distinction between 'word for word' and 'sense for sense' translation, which retains its significance to date.

Asher and Simpson (1994) say that the process of translation gained form and order initially through the rendering of the *Bible*. The Hebrew Old Testament was translated into Greek before the Christian era. Translation acquired further significance with the emergence of Christian missionaries. The New Testament was translated into a number of languages. Unlike the earlier Old Testament, translators like St. Jerome rendered 'sense for sense' translation of the New Testament.

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In England the first *Bible* translation was the rendering of *Caedmon* (seventh century). A century and a half later, Alfred the Great ordered Pope Gregory's *Pastoral Care* and other important ecclesiastical documents to be translated into Anglo-Saxon. Literal translation into vernacular languages, either from Latin or from other languages, began around the tenth century. The first translations of classical rhetoric date from this period-vernacular writers saw such translation in the same light as Livius Andronicus had seen it twelve hundred years before; it was a way of bringing the language to maturity. For the general public there were versions of Ovid and Virgil, very often taken from medieval Latin reworkings. Much of the really important translation was in the hands of troubadours who translated very freely between the vernacular languages, often extempore and as part of a performance.

Translation was also greatly promoted by the Arabs during the $8^{th}$-$10^{th}$ centuries. They translated many books on algebra, geometry, medicine, music and logic from Sanskrit into Arabic. It was during this period that the works of Aristotle, Plato, Galen and Hippocrates were translated into Arabic. The most significant translation centres in the Muslim world through the Middle Ages were the schools at Baghdad, Seville, Toledo and Cordova, where Greek philosophy and science were translated into Arabic. From the tenth century to the early twelfth century these centres, in particular Toledo, played host to a number of Christian philosophers, who translated Arabic texts into Latin and brought back to the west Greek texts that had been lost. Another important centre for this work was the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies where scientific, diplomatic and religious translators translated different works from or into Latin, Arab and Greek.

After the Christian conquest of Spain, the kings, particularly Alfonso el Sabio, commissioned technical translations from

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Arab and Latin into the vernacular. By the fourteenth century there existed a full corpus of medical works in Spanish and Catalan. In France, Charles V founded a similar cultural centre in his court. His translators included men of letters, administrators, and scientists. The most important was Nicole Oresme (1320-82), reputed to be the first to translate Aristotle into a vernacular language. London too was an important centre of royal patronage and gained dramatically in importance after William Caxton (1422-91), a skilled translator who set up his own printing press.

As the increasing might of the Turks was felt in the Byzantine Empire, during the fourteenth century, Greek scholars began moving west. Once established, they made their living by setting schools, most of which were set up at Florence and Venice, the two powerful trading republics with ruling families interested in scholarship. Manuel Chrysoloras (1355-1415) and Constantine Lascaris (1450-90) distinguished themselves as translators from Greek into Latin and considered translation as the most important task for examining educated people's scholarly skill. Among their pupils were Marsilio Ficino (1433-99), who translated Plato into Latin, and Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini (1405-64), and later Pope Pius II. In these schools, translation reverted to the manner and principles of the classical rhetoricians and, thus, dethroned the translation model of Boethius. An early pupil of the Florentine schools, Leonardo Bruni Aretino (1369-1444), translated Aristotle into Latin and wrote a preface on the necessity of translating works in a style consonant with their elegance.

Asher and Simpson (1994) state, that the sixteenth century humanism was essentially religious and translators became important for Reformation and counter-Reformation. They treated religious material no differently from other writings. The translators first sought to produce Latin *Bible* of humanist

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standard, and there were a large number of them. The most influential among them was the Greek-Latin New Testament (1523) of Desiderius Erasmus (1466-1536), the *Textus Receptus*, which studiously tried to be doctrinally neutral. However, translators like, Theodore de Beze (1519-1605) and Sebastian Castalio (1515-1563) produced *Bibles* in fairly classical Latin, but with strong doctrinal leanings.

Catholic countries tended to lag in Biblical translation. Spain continued the medieval custom of translating the Epistle and Gospels at Mass. France often readapted Protestant or doubtful Bibles, for example, the Catholic *Bible de Louvain* (1550) was Lefevre d' Etaples's edition brought up to date. Likewise, in Germany Hieronymus Emser's version (1523) tried to correct parts of Luther's *Bible* already in circulation. In England the Douay-Rheims version, translated from the Vulgate, appeared in 1588 as an emergency measure to counter the Protestant accusation that the Catholics were afraid of the *Bible*. Developing vernacular liturgies was essential to the Reformation. Partial translations of the Catholic liturgy already existed in the 'Primers'. In England, the *Book of Common Prayer* (1549) rose out of English versions from the 'Primers' and translations from the Sarum Missal and Breviary. For the next two hundred years, the *Book of Common Prayers* was translated into other European languages to serve Anglicans living overseas and in missionary congregations.

The rise of the vernaculars as standard languages slowly shifted the focus of translation towards literature. The standard languages of political and cultural centres namely, English, French, Spain and Italian moved in to replace those like Catalan and Provencal which were losing ground. Italians were in the forefront and one of the most important names among them being that of Petrarch (1304-74). In the rest of Eu-

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rope, literary translations arrived late in the sixteenth century, though there were some earlier pioneers like Gavin Douglas (1474-1522), Bishop of Dunkeld, whose Scots version of Virgil's *Aeneid* is particularly interesting. In France, among the important translators were the group of poets centred around Pierre Ronsard (1524-85), known as the Ple`iade, whose interest lay in the latest from Italy as well as Greek and Latin literature. Another important translator was Jacques Amyot (1513-93) whose French version of Plutarch's *Lives* was translated into English by Sir Thomas North (1535-1601). In England, Henry Howard, (1517-47) was known for his translations of Petrarch and the classics, and, the most famous of all, George Chapman (1559-1634) for his *Homer*. Though the centre of the intellectual world of the sixteenth century humanists was in the Classics, they saw popular education as a priority, leading to widespread translation of educational works by Erasmus (1466-1538) (particularly *Colloquia*) and Luis Viv`es (1493-1540).

The seventeenth century is known as the great age of the French classicism. Translation of the French classics, according to *The Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics* (1994), increased greatly in France between 1625 and 1660 and the French writers were in turn enthusiastically translated into English. The Salon in France, the coffee-house in Britain and the learned society everywhere in Europe were essential to the development of translation at this time. The influence of the Royal Society and the Academie Francaise was furthered by periodicals like the *Gentleman's Magazine* (1731) and *L'annee litteraire* (1754). In France, the dominant figure was Nicholas Perrot d'Ablancourt (1606-1664) whose running principle was to 'remove everything that could wound our sensibilities'. The same principle was followed by Anne Dacier (1654) in her *Homer*. The dominant figure in Britain was John Dryden, who took his famous typology of 'metaphrase', 'paraphrase' and 'imitation' from

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the French practice. He opted for paraphrase as ideal but, in practice, his poetic translation leans more towards 'imitation'. German translators like, Bodmer (1698-1783) Breitinger (1575-1655) and Gottsched (1700-1766) followed the same line.

Joshua quotes Sir John Denham saying that "the translator and the original writer are equals differentiated only by the social and temporal contexts" (2002: 3). Abraham Cowley in his 'Preface' to *Pindarique Odes* (1656) argued for freedom in translation and established imitation as a branch of translation. John Dryden's 'Preface' to Ovid's *Epistles* (1680) served as the starting point for nearly every discussion of translation in English during the eighteenth century. The prevalent impulse of the eighteenth century was to clarify the spirit or sense of the text to the readers. As a result, many translated works were re-written to fit the contemporary standards of language and taste--Samuel Johnson, George Campbell and Alexander Fraser Tyler were some of the eminent stars of this period. According to them, a translator should have the contemporary reader in mind while translating and should convey the author's spirit and manner in a more natural way.

The nineteenth century saw a variety of theories that flooded the field of translation. Joshua (2002: 4) says:

> Shelley was cynical towards translation, Friedrich Schleiermacher suggested a separate sub- language to be used for translation and D.G. Rossetti proposed that the translation should show faithfulness to the form and language of the original. The Victorian translators gave importance to literalness, archaism and formalism. Unlike Dryden and Pope, the Victorians wanted to convey the remoteness of the original in time and place.

The twentieth century witnessed the rise of the translating profession. The trigger seems to have been the establishment of

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the League of Nations in 1918. By that time many governments had translation offices for administrative purposes. After the World War II, these expanded quickly, following the post-war political and trade patterns. Private firms began to follow the lead of governments and created their own translation sections to translate everything from technical reports and instructions manuals to publicity. It was only a matter of time before free-lance translators began organizing themselves as commercial operations and into societies like FIT (la Fe`deration Internationale des Traducteurs). Specialized training is a twentieth-century phenomenon, and it gained pace in the 1960s with courses being established in universities and specialized schools. The great expansion of translation, in the first half of the twentieth century, occasioned experimentation in machine translation (MT), stemmed from a memo for an American founder of the field, Warren Weaver in 1947, on applying code-breaking techniques to languages. Results have proved limited. Its most useful spin off has been the development of automated dictionaries.

In the twentieth century, as had happened during the middle ages, the languages and literatures that were looked down as inferior and unimportant gained worldwide recognition through translation. East European works became influential, and smaller European countries important, as they appreciated that translation provided access to a greater audience for their literatures. New areas of translation developed, including popular fiction for the mass market (e.g., the works of detective writers George Simenon and Agatha Christie) and film-dubbing, which reconciles the sense of what is said with the observable features of lip and face movement. The end of the 1980s saw some attempt to combine both linguistic and literary theories of translation by absorbing the idea of linguistic transfer into a concept of translation as a communicative act whose source and target texts are embedded in different cultural matrices.

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What is translation? This question has been addressed by many scholars at different times. Translation has been considered to be something done with the language, a process of substituting a text in one language with a text in another. It is a unidirectional process starting from one language, the source language (SL) and carried over to a second receptor language or target language (TL). Generally speaking, translation is rendering the meaning of a text in one language into another language in the way the original author intended the text.

Chakraborty states, "The purpose of translation is primarily to carry the theme and the meta-theme of a SL text into a text written in another language i.e. TL. This journey of the theme and the meta-theme, encoded into one language to another language is the kernel of the translation process" (2002: 41). The translation process is no longer considered mechanistic. Of course, there are certain translation works which demand relatively mechanical substitution for facts and figures as, for instance, scientific and technological contents. The process of translation of scientific and technical writings is different from that of a creative literary work. Creative literary work embodies ideas as well as emotions of its author, whereas scientific and technical works demand full adherence to the idea as put forth by their respective authors. "It is not, say, transplantation of a tree, grown up steadily on a particular soil into an alien soil and atmosphere" (Chakraborty 2000: 41). Indeed, translation of creative literature is in itself a creative act, rather than a mechanical transfer of a theme and meta-theme written in one language into another. For this reason, there is hardly any set procedure for translation.

A good translation can be an artistic creation. In that case it transcends translation; it becomes a new creation. In this connection, one may refer to Fitzgerald's rendering of the qua-

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trains of Omar Khayyam (1048-1131), the well known Persian poet. The rendering is so effective and powerful that one hardly feels the need to know the original. Translation has been appreciated as an extension of creative exercise in the same sense as critical act has been thought of as creative exercise. Translator is a creative reader-critic. He reads, interprets, criticizes and creates. Thus, translation may be described as a process of reading, interpreting, criticizing and in that very process creating a new text for those who have no access to literature in an alien language. In other words, translation involves a complex process of understanding and analyzing the message in the SL as received by the translator. This is followed by decodification of the codified message. Then he recodifies it in the target linguistic system. The translator works on various levels. Newmark (1988: 6) says:

> Translation is first a science, which entails the knowledge and verification of the facts described and the language that describes them—here, what is wrong, that is; mistakes of truth can be identified; secondly, it is a skill, which calls for appropriate language and expectable usage; thirdly, an art, which distinguishes good from undistinguished writing and is the creative, the intuitive, sometimes the inspired, level of translation; lastly, a matter of taste, where argument ceases, preferences are expressed and the variety of meritorious translations is the reflection of individual differences.

Further, there lies the question of faithfulness of a good translation to the original text but even this is a complicated concept as Chandrika (2002: 61) puts it:

> A good translation, it is often conceded, demands a certain amount of "faithfulness". Now the question

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> is, faithful to whom? To the author, to the text, or to the reader? The translator himself becomes an author, when he translates a text; so if faithfulness is due to the author, which author should he be faithful to-the author of the original text or to the translator himself as the new author? If faithfulness to the text is the criteria, to which text should he be faithful to-the surface text or to the sub-text? Again, if the reader is the one to whom faithfulness is due, which reader is it-the reader familiar with the original text or the reader of only the translated text.

Having talked about what translation is, it will be relevant to refer here to the divergent opinions expressed about the efficacy and possibility or otherwise of translation among translation theoreticians. Chakraborty (2002) says that scholars like Roger Bacon of the 12th century and Shelly of the 18th century thought that the journey from one text to another was impossible because every language was indivisible, unitary and single. Human societies with different cultures, with different modes of life have been growing independently from time immemorial. One of the expressions of these various cultures is the peculiar form of each relevant language. The varieties of cultures persisting through the history of human society resulted in different forms of language. This view is termed 'Monadistic' (It comes from the Greek 'monos', meaning sole, lone, single, indestructible, and impenetrable).

Chakraborty (2002: 43) quotes an American linguist Edward Sapir who in his article *Selected Writing in Language Culture and Personality* (1949) strongly supports this Monadist approach as under:

> No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are dis-

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> tinct worlds not merely the same world with different labels attached.

Thus, according to the Monodist view, any attempt at translation will be a futile endeavour.

Contrary to the Monadistic view, we have Noam Chomsky who in his *Syntactic Structures* (1957) holds the opinion that the underlying structural commonalities among all human languages are factors that make translation possible and effective. He believes that every child is born with a blue print of language which is called Universal Grammar. Chomsky's deep structure model and transformational rules lend themselves to justifying a theory of translation. Chakraborty (2000: 43) quotes George Steinner supporting Chomsky's view as under:

> The one declares that the underlying structure of language is universal and common to all men. Dissimilarities between human tongues are essentially of the surface. Translation is realizable precisely because those deep seated universal, genetic, historical, social factors are universal and from those universal factors all grammars derive and can be located and recognized as operative in every human idiom, however singular or bizarre its superficial forms.

Without questioning the validity or otherwise of the above-mentioned two sets of intricate options about the possibility or otherwise of translation, one may point to the fact that mankind has actually been communicating across linguistic barriers and this is the pivot of universalism. For instance, as Newmark (1988: 12) states, "Romans Pillaged Greek culture, the Toledo school transferred Arabic and Greek learning to Europe and up to the nineteenth century European culture was drawing heavily on Latin and Greek culture".

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At times, one gets tempted to conclude that translation ought to be simple, but, in fact it is complicated, artificial, and sometimes even fraudulent-fraudulent in the sense that by using another language one pretends to be somebody that one is not. As Newmark (1988: 5) puts it:

A text may be pulled in different directions as follows:

a. The individual style of the SL author.

b. The conventional grammatical and lexical usage in the SL text depending on the topic.

c. Content items referring specifically to the SL culture.

d. The typical format of a SL text e.g., poetry, drama, fiction etc., as influenced by the tradition at that time.

e. The personal views and prejudices of the translator.

Translation is both a linguistic and cultural activity and is concerned with communication of meaning. It is not merely concerned with finding lexical equivalents of words belonging to a particular language in another language but much more. Since, each word is charged with memory, emotions, associations and literary echoes, it is difficult to find full equivalence of a SL word in the TL. That is why, total or full translation has been thought of as a myth. Since language is largely culture-orientated, translators face the problem of translating culture-based words into another language with a different culture. Colloquial expressions, culture words, slangs and proverbs are difficult to translate because there is no one-to-one correspondence between one culture and another or one language and another. For instance, in Kashmiri when we have to praise a female for her graceful gait, charming manners and fluency of speech we may symbolically refer her as *katij* (کٲتِج) literally meaning a swallow, but the above mentioned senses can hardly be conveyed by means of any accurate English word.

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In the same way other languages use different symbols for the purpose. Similarly, a word in Kashmiri is *lole* (لول) which at one and the same time comprises two senses: (a) love and (b) sense of missing and yearning. Obviously, *lole* is hard to find an exact English equivalent. Likewise, it is hard to find exact equivalents for such Kashmiri words as referring to different kinds of smell. For instance, *kanzun* ( کنزُن ) and *aamun* ( آمُن ) which refer, respectively, to the smell arising out of burning of wool and burning of cotton. Certain food items and words of common use in everyday conversation based on culture cannot be translated accurately into a foreign tongue. For example, there are two meat preparations in Kashmir called *goshtabe* ( گوشتابہ ) and *riste* ( ریستہ ). It is perhaps impossible to translate the two words with a view to differentiating between the two. What is more, Kashmiri has specific and separate names for various relations referred to by a single lexical substitute. For instance, relationships like *maam* (ماما —mother's brother), *peter* ( پیتر — father's brother), *pophuw* ( پوپھو —father's sister's husband), *maasuw* ( ماسُو — mother's sister's husband), are all called 'uncle' in English. Similarly, *maas* ( ماس —mother's sister), *poph* ( پوپھ —father's sister) *pechen,* ( پیچنی --father's brother's wife) are all called 'aunt' in English. Also, relations like *hahar* ( ہاہر — wife's brother), *baime* ( بیمہ —sister's husband) are all called as 'brother-in-law' in English. Similarly, the translation of Sanskrit *lila* as 'love play' seems to be inadequate. Rendering one text into another may create grammatical problems as well. For instance, the influence of L1 (mother tongue) on the use of English by, say, an Urdu speaking Indian may create sentences like. 'I am feeling cold', instead of 'I feel cold'. 'I am loving her' instead of 'I love her' 'I am liking you', instead of 'I like you', etc, which are un-English in feature. Das quotes Smith saying that "to translate is to change into another language, retaining as much of the sense as one can" (2002: 22). But, retaining the

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sense alone is not enough. We have to maintain the semantic compatibility along with grammaticality as well.

As regards literal translation, it has its advantages as well as limitations. If, for example, we translate a Kashmiri word like *pechkash* as 'screwdriver' in English, it would be fully acceptable, but if we come across a word like 'block' which in American English means 'a rectangular section of a city or town bounded on each side by consecutive streets' or 'a segment of a street bounded by successive cross streets'. A language like Kashmiri or Urdu does not have any such equivalent as could be helpful in translating a sentence like 'we used to live on the same block'. Similarly, if the Kashmiri expressions like *shrake-puch gaard* ( شراکہ پچ گاڑ ) and *chitte pompur* ( چھٹے پونپر ) are translated literally into 'small knife fish' and 'printed moth' respectively, the translation will not convey the sense adequately. So would be the case with a Kashmiri sentence like *tames gaye koker*, meaning he felt helpless and belittled would prove to be a travesty of translation if translated literally as 'he became a hen'. On the other hand, the literal translation of an English phrase like 'heat and cold' would be accepted if translated as *garme te sarde* in Kashmiri or *garme aur sarde* in Urdu.

The problem of translation becomes all the more challenging in the domain of creative literature. Creative literature finds its most authentic expression in poetry. Translating poetry is more problematic than other genres like novel, prose and short-story. The language of creative literature, particularly, that of poetry, possesses the quality of concretion, vividness and vitality as against the language of abstraction, generally appropriate to various types of informative literature. Poetry embodies emotional, psychological and imaginative experiences, and not mere knowledge and information; and experiences of that kind often tend to find expression in such figures of speech as metaphor, simile, image, symbol, etc. Moreover, po-

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etry uses language dialectically, not referentially or unambiguously, and this appears in features like irony, paradox, conceit, etc. Put together, these two qualities lead to plurisignation, and inexhaustible suggestiveness. Then, there is the musical quality which finds expression in the phonetic sounds and the meter employed.

The translator of poetry has not to translate merely the word but the import of the word in a particular context. He does not have to render merely a line of a poem but the meaning that arise from the arrangement of all the words and the lines of a poem and that which lies between the lines. As Malik (2001: 4) quotes Coleridge saying that "the words of a poem are irreplaceable like the stones of a pyramid so that if one stone is removed the whole edifice will crumble down". The great Urdu poet Mirza Ghalib in a verse of his in *Deewa-e-Ghalib* (1829) described the word used in poetry as "The magic of the treasure filled up with meaning".

Musical qualities of poetry are much more difficult--almost impossible--to translate as they spring from sound and speech rhythms peculiar to a language and the way a poet handles them. To illustrate the point, we may refer to the inimitable music found in the verses of Blake (1794: 8) as follows:

> Tiger! Tiger! Burning bright
> In the forests of the night,
> What immortal hand or eye
> Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

Likewise, to capture the music of some of the verses of poets like Mahmud Gami, Rasul Mir, and Mahjoor proves to be extremely difficult.

Rasul Mir (1977: 18):

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رِنِد پوشہِ مال گِنِد نے وزایہِ لولو
شوٗبہِ شاباش چانہِ پوٚت ژھایہِ لولو

O the clever, joyful garland of flowers you have come out to play;
Your lovely gait seen from behind you deserves all praise.

**Mahmmud Gami (1997: 27):**

گرسا میون نیٔاے اَندے
مأرِی مَندے مدنوارو

When shall my imbroglio end
O my graceful beloved?

**Mahjoor (1984: 30):**

نوزُک وأنجہِ کمیٔ وأرِی داتَن واتنوٗے ژٕے آزار
تَتہِ تہِ چھا یٔتچی ہِش بیرأہی تَتہِ تہِ چھا یُتھے گٹہِ کار

What mishap has tormented your tender heart?
Does the same depravity prevail over there as it does here?
Is that place too drowned in darkness as is the place here?

In the first verse by Rasul Mir the word-music created by rhymes like, *rinde* and *ginde* and the repetition of ( ش ) sound is hard to recapture in English. Likewise, in the second hemistich of the verse by Mahmmud Gami quoted above the music

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created by the repetition of the initial ( ر ) sound found in the words *mari*, *mande* and *madanwaro* is difficult to preserve while rendering the verse into English. Also the word *madanwaaro* used in the above mentioned hemistich in Kashmiri means a lovable person reminding one of *Kaamdeev* (the god of love in Hindu mythology) but the translators usually translate it merely as 'beloved', which does not put across the sense adequately. Similarly, in the third verse by Mahjoor, the music created by the alliteration of the initial ( ؤ ) sound in words *vaenij*, *vaeridath* and *vaatunovuy* is not easy to retain in translation.

It is against the background of various problems faced by the translators hinted at above that we find different theories of translation being propounded by various theoreticians. If there were no problems, there would be no theories whatsoever. Translation theory would be pointless and sterile if it did not arise from the problems of translation practice. A translation theory, after identifying the translation problem should indicate all the factors that have to be taken into account in solving the problem, to list all possible translation procedures and, finally, to recommend the most suitable translation procedure, plus the appropriate translation.

Suka Joshua (2002) has identified three major contributors to the theory of translation namely, J.C. Catford, Eugene A. Nida and Peter Newmark. The first theorist that he discusses is Catford (b. 1917), who in his *A Linguistic Theory of Translation* (1965) defines translation as the replacement of source language text material by an equivalent target language material. He defines translation in terms of equivalence relations. He (1965: 21) asserts that "the central problem of translation practice is that of finding TL translation equivalents. A central task of translation theory is that of defining the nature and conditions of translation equivalence".

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Since translation deals with relation between languages, Catford considers translation as a branch of comparative linguistics. He introduced the concept of 'total translation' and 'restricted translation'. 'Total translation', according to Catford, is the replacement of source language phonology and graphology whereas 'restricted translation', is replacement of source language textual material by equivalent target language material.

Catford's theory of translation is a theory of meaning. He considers meaning as a property of language, that is to say, a source language text has a source language meaning and a target language text has a target language meaning. His theory also points out the difference between translation and transference. In translation the source language meaning is substituted by target language meaning, but what takes place in transference is the implantation of source language meaning into target language text. Catford makes it clear that the source language texts are neither absolutely translatable nor absolutely untranslatable. Elaborating the point, he talks about two types of untranslatablities: a) linguistic untranslatability and b) cultural untranslatability. Lack of formal correspondence between the source language and the target language leads to linguistic untranslatability. This untranslatability can occur because of oligosemy i.e., an item having a particular restricted sense, for example the word *rouf* ( رؤف ) in Kashmiri refers to a special dance like activity performed by female folk on certain special social occasions, and it has no lexical equivalent in English. In the same way, cultural untranslatability occurs when a situational feature peculiar to the source language text is absent from the culture of the target language text, for example, the expression *desh ganden* ( دۄش گنٛدٕن ) that is to tie a piece of cloth or thread to the window of a shrine desiring fulfillment of a certain wish is absent from the culturally different language like English.

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Notwithstanding the importance of Catford's work on the theory of translation, it may be pointed out that his theory ignores certain factors that influence the process of translation, like the translator himself, his social and cultural background, his audience, his aim in translation, and so on. Also, as Paranjape (1977: 33) states that "this model never goes beyond the sentence to incorporate the text as a unit of meaning. Last but not the least, his model is of a very limited use in evaluating translation".

Second significant theorist discussed is Eugene A. Nida (b. 1914) who provides a descriptive approach to the translation process. His theory is focused upon the receptor. His approach is sociolinguistic and receptor-oriented; he takes into consideration contextual features besides the textual or linguistic features. He considers the pragmatic or emotive meaning as the most important factor in transferring the message from source language to the target language. Nida also draws a distinction between language and meta-language and emphasizes that this distinction is extremely important for the translator.

Nida is of the view that subjectivity cannot be avoided in translation because the translator becomes a part of the cultural context in which he lives. Nida's theory also talks about two types of equivalence, formal and dynamic equivalences. A formal equivalence focuses its attention on the message, while dynamic equivalence is oriented towards the receptor response. He is of the view that the ultimate purpose of translation is to make it sound as original as possible. The major focus of Nida's theory of translation is the receptor and his reaction. He talks about the old focus and the new focus in translating. The old focus is the form of the message while the new focus is the response of the receptor.

Although Nida's contribution to the field of translation has

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been significant, his exclusive concern with the *Bible* translation is found as his major limitation. Since, the process of translation varies depending on the type of the text, his theory cannot be fully followed while translating other creative literatures.

The third important contributor to the theory of translation discussed by Joshua is Peter Newmark (b. 1916). His unique contribution to the theory of translation is his detailed treatment of semantic vs. communicative translation, which he discusses extensively in his *Approaches to Translation* (1981). According to him the semantic translation focuses primarily upon the semantic context of the source text and the communicative translation focuses upon the comprehension and response of receptors. This distinction makes this theory of translation relevant for translating a variety of literature as Sawat (2002: 75) puts it:

> Unlike Nida whose theory is exclusively concerned with the Bible translating, Newmark's takes into account a full range of text-types and their corresponding translation criteria, as well as the major variables involved like Nida, Newmark's approach to translation is pragmatic and discourse-oriented Unlike him, however, he considers a wide diversity of text-types.

Newmark's translation theory provides a framework of principles, rules and hints for translating texts and criticizing translations. He insists on treating the basic prepositions of translation in terms of a theory of communication. His theory highlights the theory of meaning. Newmark (1988: 20) talks about three functions of language:

1. Expressive function, which is author centered.
2. Informative function, which gives the extra linguistic information, context of the text.
3. Vocative function, which is reader centered.

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Apart from these principles, Newmark also talks about three levels of translation: referential, textual and subjective. These levels have been likened to the tubes of a joined telescope with which the translator observes the three functions of language in various degrees. In translating a literary text the translation language is 'expressive' and the level is 'subjective'. In translating a non-literary text the language is 'informative' and the level is 'referential'.

Newmark also expounds two basic translation processes, i.e., comprehension and formulation. Comprehension has to do with interpretation and formulation has to do with recreation. The two methods of translation that Newmark advocates are communicative and semantic translation. In communicative translation the translator attempts to produce the same effect on the receptors as was produced by the original on the source language reader. In semantic translation the translator attempts to reproduce the precise contextual meaning of the author. In view of the fact that all translators are to some degree both communicative and semantic, Newmark's theory seems to be appropriate to translate any type of text.

All these significant theories of translation prove that a translator needs much original genius to re-create a text. In fact, a translator should possess certain qualities like; in the first place, he should possess an inwardness with both the languages--SL and TL. He should have mastery over both and, above all, he should have "feel" of the languages. The translator is a writer in the language in which he is translating, that is to say, his handling of the language does not demand merely his competence but his creative capability as well. So he has to maintain a balance between close fidelity to the original and utter freedom from it. Translation is neither "transliteration" nor "transcreation". He has to guard against the danger of word-for-word literal translation as well as taking too much

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liberty. His task is more difficult than a creative writer for the latter thinks and writes in one language while the former has to make a tight rope walking between the two languages.

The fundamental requirement for translation, however, is that no matter which principle or theory of translation a translator chooses, his translation in the end should look as natural as possible. As Peter Newmark points "You have to make the passage sound natural which will depend on the degree of formality you have decided on for the whole text" (1988: 25).

Natural usage is not the same as the ordinary usage. To make the point clear, it may be said that a word-for-word translation might be natural for, say, an advertisement. Likewise, an emotive translation would be natural for, say, a lyric. Natural usage comprises a variety of idioms or styles or registers determined primarily by the setting of the text, i.e. where it is typically published or found. Secondly, it is determined by the author, topic and readership all of whom are usually dependent on the setting.

Appreciating the varieties of the above mentioned theories it may be concluded that the very early principle, 'word for word' vs. 'sense for sense' advocated by scholars many centuries ago can be seen emerging again and again with different degrees of emphasis in different times according to different concepts of language communication.

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# Chapter – II

## Ghulam Ahmad Mahjoor: 'The Poet of Kashmir'

Many prominent historians of Kashmiri language and literature, like Azad (1984), Avtar Krishan Rahbar (1997), Naji Munawwar, Shafi Shauq (1992), Jayalal Kaul (1968) and Raina (2002) agree that the history of Kashmiri poetry began in the real sense in the second half of the 14th century. This period is considered to be one of the most important periods in Kashmir history as a whole. Firstly, because this period saw an extraordinary spread of Islam and its becoming the dominant religion in Kashmir, followed by the replacement of centuries old Hindu rule by the Muslim rule. Secondly, because the classic Sanskrit tradition of the Hindu period of Kashmir history lost its hold, and thirdly, because this period saw the appearance of a bright star in the firmament of Kashmiri poetry, namely, the mystic poetess Lal Ded, who established the *vaakh* as a powerful metrical form of poetic expression. *Vaakh*, as Jayalal Kaul (1968: 27) says, "is generally a four-line quatrain, thematically complete and independent in itself, a sententious gnomic verse, mystical or didactic". The collection of Kashmiri verses known as *Lala vaakh* is considered to be Lala's spiritual autobiography. Lala used the *vaakh* form to commu-

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nicate her intense mystical experiences. In her verses is found a passionate apprehension of mystic truth which is the mark of a God-realizing saint. Lal Ded not only wove attractive poetic patterns and imagery from the fabric of Kashmiri people's own idiom but she also continued the tradition of their indigenous monistic philosophy, known as Kashmiri Shavism. Given below are a few verses of her translated by Jayalal Kaul (1968: 30):

1) Searching and seeking Him I, Lalla, wearied myself,
   And even beyond my strength I strove;
   Then, looking for Him, I found the doors closed and latched.
2) With a rope of untwisted thread I tow my boat,
   Would God hear my prayer and bring me safe across!
   Like water in cups of unbaked clay I waste away,
   And long to reach my home!
3) I cut my way through the six Forests,
   And light shone forth from the Awakened Moon.
   I controlled the vital airs and prakriti frozen
   Then I parched my heart in the fire of love
   And thus came to Shanker, the Supreme Self.

In her verses Lal Ded tells us how on her spiritual path she had to undergo all the painful processes that anyone seeking the ultimate truth undergoes all through his/her spiritual journey. This experience she has expressed by means of a powerful image, presenting a person towing a boat with an unspun thread or like someone trying in vain to hold water in unbaked clay. In one of her very famous *vaakh* she speaks of the unintelligible world around her with its sensual pleasures and feels it like a sugar candy burden that has bent her body and, galled her back.

A younger contemporary of Lal Ded was the famous founder saint of the Rishi order of Kashmir, Sheikh Nur-ud-din Wali (1376-1438) of Tsrar-i-Sharief popularly known as Nund Rishi. Nund Rishi's verses are found in the poetic form

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known as *shrukhs*, many of which are mostly didactic in content and exhortative in tone. Formally, the *shrukh* does not seem any different from the *vaakh*, both of them generally consisting of a four-line quatrain. In most of his shrukhs, Nund Reshi speaks of the transitoriness of life and the ephemeral nature of mundane pleasures. No doubt, many of the *shrukhs* are didactic in content but there are several others which most powerfully present the poet's spiritual experience, his feelings in the presence of what may be termed as the Supreme Being, his emotional contact with what is known as death and his apprehensions about the unknown situations he might happen to face in life after death. He exhorts people to follow Islam with all seriousness and passion. He does not discourse merely on what to believe, but what to become, irrespective of the religious label one bears. For Sheikh-ul-Alam as well as for Lal Ded the ultimate reality is formless. Both endeavour to make people cleanse their minds to become fit receptacles of true knowledge. One of the attractions of Nund Rishi's shrukhs is the vivid imagery gleaned from day-to-day observations and experiences. Along with this quality goes his pithy and rememberable expression. The spiritual experience and the close knowledge of his society put forth in almost a colloquial language has made him an abiding influence on all Kashmiri people and also the poets that came after him. Jayalal Kaul (1968: 35) illustrates the point by quoting some of his verses as under:

1) Would you know what Oneness is?
   But you will cease to be.
   For Oneness is all. Its splendor vast
   Has set all this aflame.
   Would you know what Oneness is?
   But reason and thought will reach it not,
   And who within his ken can bring the Infinite?

2) No wonder, born of the same father and mother,

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We bear no ill-will to each other.
Should our love bind us all alike, Hindu and Musalman,
Then surely God is pleased with us.

With the beginning of the 16th century began the next period of Kashmiri poetry, which lasted up to the 18th century and beyond. In this period appeared a pronounced change both in theme and form. Thematically, mystic love was replaced by human love and the form moved from *vaakh* to *vatsun*.

*Vatsun*, as Raina (1989: 67) states, "is a short poem, mostly consisting of three lines having the same rhyme followed by a refrain". Traditionally, a *vatsun* is an expression of a woman's feelings born of the living experiences of womanhood; for instance, the episodes of love, infinite longing and pangs of separation with consequent doubts and suspicions about the faithlessness of the loved one. Each *vatsun* is a single entity having an emotional continuity. In most of such lyrics we find little abandon to sensuous or supernal joy and little gaiety of tone.

Among writers of *vatsun* type of love-lyrics are counted the two famous poetesses, namely, Habba Khatoon (16th century) and Arn'nymaal (18th century). By the 16th century the influence of Persian was overpowering. Habba Khatoon not only revived interest in Kashmiri songs but also gave a new kind of lyric, a secular song lyric. Kashmir had to wait nearly two hundred years after Lal Ded before the valley found another significant women poet in Habba Khatoon. In her lyrics the poetess sings of a complex of her love, longing and a tugging at the heart. As Jayalal Kaul (1968: 188) puts it:

> Her lyrics are not intellectual at. There is nothing mystical, moral or sermon like about it. It talks of secular and mundane love and so much of love's exaltation rapture or ennobling idealism as of its pain and smart, frustration and disillusionment, sadness and sorrow of unrequited love. However, we find in

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a few of her lyrics a touch of sensuous gaiety, which is a quality rarely found in lyrics of the kind.

Habba Khatoon was the first songstress who gave Kashmiri poetry a new kind of secular lyric known as *lole-lyric* (love-lyric) and presented it in *vatsun* form. The following lyrics of Habba Khatoon, as translated by Jayalal Kaul (1968: 189,192) are examples of the kind:

1) Come friend, let us go to banks and braes
For dandelion and water cress.
Let us not heed what others say
In rumour and in gossip rude.
They slander me: that is my fate.
...
I wait and wait the whole night through
For love's message.
I know no rest nor sleep.
O come, my love, O come to me.
Come, leave estrangements all,
Respond to the urgent call of love,
See how I still do yearn for you.
Life is short, we have not long to stay.
Then come, my Love, O come to me.

2) At the dead of night, I opened the gate
For you to come in awhile.
I love you, love then why waste time,
And why, O why, forsake me thus?
...
See, in the crucible of love,
I burn to ashes, and yearn for you.
My almond eyes weep copious tears
For you and only you.
But you avoid the very streets
That lead you to my gate.

Habba Khatoon may prominently be included in the list of Kashmiri poets intimately known to the Kashmiri people as a

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whole. The whole stream of love-lyrics from the 16th century to the present day presents in one way or the other the theme as well as the form of Habba Khatoon's love-songs somuchso that the famous 20th century poet Mahjoor was inspired to start his career as a Kashmiri poet by one of Habba Khatoon's songs. At the end of the 18th century, we find the famous poetess, Arn'nymaal carrying on the tradition of Habba Khatoon. She too employed the *vatsun* form, throbbing with a plaintive tone and an atmosphere of unmitigated gloom and resignation to fate. Comparing Arn'nymaal with her predecessor Habba Khatoon, Raina (2002: 34) comments:

> Arn'nymaal's poems are an expression of unrelieved gloom, while Habba Khatoon's poetry presents a normal mixture of light and shade. Habba Khatoon, does mention disappointments, but she also talks about love received. No such ray of sunshine ever permeates the gloom of Arn'nymaal

**As an example of her gloom the following verses of her translated by Jayalal Kaul (1968: 198) may be quoted:**

1) A summer jasmine I had bloomed
But now have turned a yellow rose.
When will my love come unto me?
I treated him to candy sweet,
He took my heart and I was duped.
Now he is gone, and I am made
A laughing stock for all to see.
Will no one tell him what I feel?

2) Will he ever find time to see me?
There is no end to my shedding tears
The fire burning with me dries up even my tears.

3) Friend, do not laugh at me
Is there anybody who has suffered as I do?
I, whose young love has left her for good,

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Sitting in my splendid room I heard the door screeching.
I thought it was He who has entered into my premises
But not having found him, my heart is sinking.

The 19th century saw a different phase of Kashmiri poetry. During this century, two notable developments took place: one relating to a significant influence of Persian on Kashmiri poetry and the other to the adoption of a few new genres of poetry. As regards the first development, mention may be made of the fact that by now Persian had spread across the whole of Kashmir and was firmly established as the official and court language of the place and also as the language of the elite. As a result of this development, we, on the one hand, find people belonging to the learned classes using Persian as a medium of their poetic expression and, on the other hand those who chose Kashmiri for their poetic compositions which they modeled on Persian types. This new trend in Kashmiri poetry owes its impetus to the influence of Persian language and literature. As a consequence, several literary art forms were borrowed and put to use enriching the indigenous literature. The most important art form borrowed from Persian which flourished during this period was the *mathnawi*, a long narrative poem dealing with themes like romantic love (distinguished as *bazmia mathnavi*), or dealing with adventure, war or astonishing deeds of valour and adventure (known as *razmia mathnavi*). We find Kashmiri poets like Mahmmud Gami (1765-1855), Maqbool Shah Kraalwaari (19th C), Wali Ullah Motto (19th C), Pir Mohi-ud-din Miskeen (19th C), etc., earning their fame by employing as themes in their *mathnavis* the well known legends and love-stories of Persian origin like Laila Majnoon, Yusuf Zuleika and Shirin Farhad, while occasionally employing some indigenous legends and stories like Heemaal Nagirai and Aknandun. We also find poets like Wahab Pare (19th C), Lakshman joo Raina Bulbul (1812-1884) and Amir Shah Kreeri (1869-1930) earning

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their fame either by translating or adapting Persian themes concerning the exploits of war-heroes like Rustum and Sohrab, Zaal and Saam. This was accompanied by a wholesale borrowing of Persian allusions, figures of speech, etc. A few examples of the Persian allusions thus borrowed are the ones underlined in the following verses:

**Soch Kraal (2002: 28):**

فَرہاد کۆر عشقن مارَے
کھوٚت ژَٹنے کوہِ قافَس
بُجہِ اکہِ سۍ کۆرنۍ مارَے
رَچھہِ نارَے ملِکُ الجبار

Farhad was impelled by love,
He tried to cut through the Kohi Kaaf,
An old woman caused his death,
May the Almighty protect you!

**Shah Gafoor (1965: 98):**

دارس پٹھ پانہِ دوٚپنے اَنے
شیخ منصوٗرس لوٚدُکھ رَہ

It was He himself who uttered 'I Am'
But Sheikh Mansoor was accused instead.

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**Soch Kraal (2002: 28):**

مُجلوٗنَن کوٚرنے کارَے
کھوٚت نُجدَس لأل ژھاران
مُتی رَچہ نے گوپھہِ تے غارَے
رَچھہِ نارَے ملکُ الجبار

Majnoon made a marvelous endeavour,
Looking for Laila, he climbed the Najd,
The madman chose to dwell in holes and caves,
May the Almighty protect you!

Among the figures of speech borrowed, mention may be made of similes like *sarv* (cypress) and *shamshad* (the box-tree) for the beloved's lovely stature and *maari paychaan* (coiled serpent) and *eshqi paychaan* (Morning Glory) for the beloved's attractive curly tresses. Likewise, metaphors like *mas khaes* (wine goblets) and *gulab* (rose) for the beloved's charming eyes and beautiful face respectively, and symbols like *gul* (rose-bud) and *bulbul* (Nightingale) standing for the beloved and the lover, respectively, were borrowed from Persian.

Another genre borrowed from Persian and, later on, becoming one of the most important genres of Kashmiri poetry was the *ghazal*. Although some scholars considered Mahmmud Gami to be the first to introduce the *ghazal* in Kashmiri poetry but latest research done by Naji Munawwar (1998) has ascribed the introduction of this genre to Maqbool Amritsari (19th C).

The *ghazal* is a peculiar kind of poetry consisting of various couplets each of which is thematically complete and in-

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dependent of other couplets. The number of couplets used in it generally vary from five to fifteen couched in any Persian quantitative metre. The two lines of the first couplet (called *matla'*) rhyme together, and the second line of all the following couplets rhyme with the opening couplet. In the closing couplet (called *maqta'*) poets, generally, use their pen names. As for the subject dealt with in the ghazal during the nineteenth century, it may be said that things related to human love were dominant. Prominent *ghazal* writers of this period like Mahmmud Gami (1765-1855) and Rasul Mir (1802-1892) used this form chiefly as a medium for expressing their feelings of mundane love.

Notwithstanding the introduction of genres and themes borrowed from Persian, the older mystic tradition continued to survive even during this period creating a valuable treasure of mystic poetry. The mystic poetry of this period was dominated by two streams of mystic thought namely, Tasavuf (Islamic mysticism) and Bhakti (the Hindu mystic tradition). This kind of poetry owes its verve and beauty to poets like Soch Kraal (19th C), Shams Fakir (1843-1904), Nyama Saheb (19th C), Wahab Khaar (19th C) and Rahmaan Daar (19th C), on the one hand, and to poets like Parmanand (1794-1879), Krishnajoo Razdan (1850-1926) and Prakash Raam Kurigaami (19th C), on the other hand.

Having presented a brief account of the literary background of Kashmiri Poetry, we may now sum up the whole account of Kashmiri poetry before the arrival of Mahjoor in the twentieth century. It may be pointed out here that up to the end of the nineteenth century Kashmiri poetry existed mostly in oral form. The poetry was transmitted either by means of individual presentation or by recitation by folk singers who presented Kashmiri songs to the accompaniment of folk music like *chhakree*. Poetry was rarely recorded in manuscript form,

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and was hardly printed. Had not the common Kashmiri loved the poets earnestly and thus committed their poetry to memory and passed that from one generation to another the treasure of the poetry in point would have been lost forever. Most of the Kashmiri poets came from the common stock and largely wrote for an unlettered class. The only poems which evoked people's interest were either mystical or devotional in kind like *naat* (encomium) and *lila* (hymn) or humorous and satirical ballads called *ladi shah*, or festival songs like *rouf* and *wanvun*. Raina (2002: 8) seems to be right when he says, "If the two themes of mysticism and love are dropped from earlier stock of Kashmiri poetry, very little poetry would be left".

It may be added here that Persian, which for the past four hundred years had remained the official and court language of Kashmir, laid great impression both on Kashmiri language and its literature. In poetry, Persian quantitative rhythm and metre came into use side by side with the traditional Kashmiri qualitative metre. Similarly, new forms like *mathnawi* and *ghazal* were borrowed from Persian poetry. This was followed by a wholesale borrowing of Persian themes, allusions and figures of speech. Thus, an insufficiency of creative energy along with a sort of literary imitation was near completion by the end of the nineteenth century.

With the dawn of the twentieth century, Kashmir, according to Raina (2002), seemed to stand on the threshold of a new era. Various historical and political forces led to the end of the age-old feudal Kashmir. With the development of better means of communication with the Indian sub-continent and various facilities for education it became possible for young Kashmiris to go outside for higher studies. Contact with progressive forces in India, under the powerful impact of freedom struggle in the country, created a new ferment in the minds of the intelligentsia and an awakening in the souls of common men.

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With these new forces socio-political changes seemed inevitable. At the same time, the elimination of Persian, as the court language, ended its domination and encouraged the educated young men to devote more attention to their mother tongue. With the development of the sense of Kashmiri identity and a changed free environment, old themes and traditional forms needed a radical reform. A new age thus seemed to be at hand.

One of the pioneers of this new age was Ghulam Ahmad Mahjoor. Silhouetted against the background of poetry written before him, Mahjoor (1887-1952) may be fairly called the harbinger of a sort of renaissance in Kashmiri poetry. However, it may be pointed out here that Mahjoor's attitude was not an attitude of an outright rebel. In spite of the rejuvenation of Kashmiri poetry that Mahjoor was responsible for, he remained, to some extent, a blend of tradition and experiment. While he discarded stylized love and foreign symbols to a considerable extent in a number of his earlier poems, he retained the traditional symbols of *gul* and *bulbul* in his later poetic career and imparted fresh significant to these traditional symbols so as to give utterance to his patriotic feelings as well as his social and political thought. Not only this, he even retained the traditional genres like the *vatsun* and the *ghazal* though introducing in them such themes as may be described modern, and couched those themes in a language understood by the learned and the common populace alike. This was achieved by means of simplicity and sweetness of expression which reminded people of earlier poets like Habba Khatoon, Arn'nymaal and Mahmmud Gami. No doubt, that these poets had taken lead in using simple and idiomatic Kashmiri, Mahjoor added more colour and beauty to the simplicity, softness and music of his predecessors. The following verses illustrate the point:

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**Habba Khatoon (1995: 87):**

دل نتھ رٔٹی تھم گوشے

ولو میٲنہٕ پوشے مَدِنو

Having stolen my heart, you have taken as your abode secluded corners.
Come O my flower-fan beloved.

**Mahjoor (1984: 140):**

وٕیسی پے کیاہ مَلالہٕ روٚٹ جانانَن

جاے تمٕ رٔٹ پُرستانَن مَنٛز

**Raina (1988: 26) puts it as:**

Friend, why is my love so cross with me
That he has chosen to live in fairyland?

**Mahmmud Gami (1977: 139):**

بَربکہٕ آیَس وَنہٕ ہا خودایَس

کیٚا سَنا پٕیٹہٕ نا پایَس یار

...

ژھاراں ژھاراں لار واژٕایَس

لاراں لاراں لوٚسُم دوہ

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وَنہٕ کس اَوحال وَن روزایَس

کیٚا سَنا پٕیٚہٕ نا پایَس یار

My heart brimming with agony I would beseech God to make my beloved realize my pain
In order to find him out I happened to reached Laar a far off place,
Seeking him I wandered hither and dither till the day reached its end
To whom shall I disclose my anguish Oh! If he could realize my suffering.

**Mahjoor (1984: 130):**

کیٚا سَنا یٕیہٕ نا سُہ دِلبر رویہٕ زیبا ہاوِنا

سیٚنہٕ زولُم لولہٕ نارن کیٚنہٕ مٕیٚونے تٚراوِنا

روشہِ روشے باغ وَسہِ ناگُل وُچھن حُسنُک بہار

سٚومبلَن کرِنا پریشاں بُلبلن مُژراوِنا

Won't my beloved leave that frown,
And show his lovely face?
My bosom is consumed in the fire of love.
Won't he glide into the garden?
Buds will burst into ecstatic bloom,
Hyacinths open out amazed,
And the bulbuls will be mad with joy.

In the above verses the use of the word 'paristan' (fairy land) by Mahjoor makes it more imaginative as compared to that of Habba Khatoon. By using an expressive image related to the beloved's arrival in the garden and its immediate impact

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on the on-looking flowers, Mahjoor creates a dramatic spectacle, thus rendering his verse richer as compared to Mahmmud Gami. Mahjoor, in fact, established a link between the poetry written before him and the poetry written after 1947. But, for him, it would be difficult to understand modern age in Kashmiri poetry.

As discussed earlier, noted poets like Lal Ded (14th century), Nund Reshi (14th-15thcentury), Parmanand, Krishnajoo Razdan, Socch Kral, Wahab Khaar, Rahman Daar, Shams Faqir and Nyama Saheb (all belonging to 19th century) dominated the scene in their particular times and evolved, in their unique ways themes steeped deep in mystic and spiritual thought and experience. All through this long period, these poets wove a somewhat common thread of faith in the unity of Being (the belief that the creator and the creation are no different but one in essence) and resignation to the unscrutable ways of fate (the belief that whatever has been recorded as inevitable in the Book of Fate is destined to take place, come what may). Their works lacked gaiety and buoyancy as those things were known to the common man which generally go hand in hand with hope and aspiration. The following verses may be quoted as examples:

**Unity of Being:**

**Lal Ded (1961: 70):**

دیٖو وَتا دِوُر وَتا

پٮٹھ بون چھُے یٖکہٕ واٹھ

پُوز کس کرَکھ ہوٚٹہٕ بَتا

کرمنَس تہٕ پَونس سَنگاٹھ

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An idol is a mound of stone,
A temple is a mound of stone;
Top above and bottom beneath are one
Whom will you offer worship,
O unintelligent Pandit?
Achieve a communion of mind and breath.

**Sheikh-ul-Aalam (1998: 100):**

گُنبرَے بوزَکھ کُنہِ نو روزَکھ
أمی کُنزَن کوتاہ دُنیت جَلاو
عقل تہٕ فِکر تور کوٗت سوزَکھ
کمٔی مالہٕ چھتھ ہیوٚک سُہ ڈٚرکیاو

If you ponder over the oneness, you will cease to be
How much refulgence has this oneness emitted?
Where will you send your intellect and your thought?
O dear! Who has been able to drink up that ocean?

**Soch Kraal (2003: 82):**

تیٚمی سُند وولُرتَے تُمی ہنٚزے ناو
وولرس تہٕ واوس چھے کُنے بساو
زٚھبن کَتہِ لَبَس ناو چھُس واو
ناو در آب تَے آب دَر ناو

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To whom belongs the Wular, the boat too belongs to him,
The Wular and the boat have a common dwelling
One can't find a rupture in the wind
The boat is in the water and the water is in the boat.

**Unscrutable ways of Fate:**

**Sheikh-ul-Alam (1998: 148):**

سَرفَس ژُلی زِ اَستس گھنڈَس
ہیہس ژُلی زِ گُرہَس تانی
قَرضدارس ژُلی زِ وَہرَس گھنڈس
لأنِس ژُلی زِ نہٕ أچھ موٚہَس تانی

One may run away a few feet from the snake,
One may run away a mile from the lion,
One may avoid a lender for a year,
But, one can't run away from Fate even for a jiffy.

**Rahmaan Daar (1964: 151):**

تَدبیر گراں وُمبر مالہِ رأوم، تَقدیر آم نو وَنے
یی لاہِ لیوکھنَم لَوحِ مَحفوظَس تی چھس نگھہٕ والان

Making this and that effort, I wasted my life, but
couldn't comprehend the ways of Fate.
Whatever Fate has inscribed in the Book, I suffer.

Contrasted with the traditional ways of thought and belief hinted at above, we find Mahjoor passionately loving life in all its mundane aspects so that issues like life's impermanence or

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the inevitability of death did not engage him. To quote Raina (2002: 103):

> In his earlier life, he wasn't interested in politics; he wasn't interested in religion in any deeper sense as was clear from his refusal to follow his father's priestly profession, for his essentially Catholic mind was opposed to bigotry and fanaticism.

Not denying the fact that there does exist in Mahjoor's poetry a verse which happens to raise a question concerning the ultimate but unexplainable end of life into death:

یُس راجہِ چمنک باجہِ وایاں تَس چھِ جاناوار
سُہ تہِ کیازِ ژٹھِ جامہِ پَریشان چھُنتھ گوو

The import of the above verse is: 'The king of the garden (i.e. the rose) who is entertained by the bird's melodious twitters, why is it that he too is obliged at last to tear open his garments and to get scattered into nothingness'.

Again, Mahjoor has to his credit a full-fledged poem, entitled *yemberzal*, where he presents a metaphysical problem in an engaging manner. Nevertheless, as Rahi (2004: 187) observes, "this poem is the solitary poem of its kind in the whole of Mahjoor's works". Generally speaking, his poetry, as Raina quoting Zind Kaul says, "is like a beautiful lotus in bloom" (1978: 46). As a consequence of this attitude towards things, Mahjoor's poetry was initially characterized by a stream of scintillating lyrics and love-strains of mundane character dealing with the lover's cravings and aspirations, hopes and fears, pain and pleasure. It may incidentally be pointed out here, that Mahjoor followed his predecessors by presenting the lover in his lyrics as a female. The following verses of Mahjoor as translated by

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Raina stand proof to it:

**Mahjoor (1984: 96):**

ژۆلہما روشے روشے　　پوشے مَتہِ جانانو

أتی أتی روز تو یارو　　کۆت ژۆلکھ جودۆ گارو

گوڈِ گر میۆنُے چارو　　پوشے مَتہِ جانانو

...

یکھنا حالِ دِل باوَے　　دۆ دمُت سینہِ ہا ہاوَے

تیلہِ یکھا یلہ بو راوَے　　پوشے مَتہِ جانانو

**Raina (1989: 3) puts it as:**

You stole away with furtive gait,
O lover of flowers, my sweetheart!
Stay, O stay, my love!
O wizard, why must you leave me thus?
Tell me shall I survive.
...
Come, love, and see my heart,
My bosom consumed with fire.
Will you come only when I'm gone?

**Mahjoor (1984: 101):**

جلوِ ہأوتھ دۆر ترٚ أوتھ تَمبلأوتھ ژۆلہمو

آرِ رَستے یارِ لگیو خارِ تھأوتھ ژۆلہمو

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قولہٕ رَستیوٚ دولہٕ وُچھنَن چاٚنی کوٚرَم ہول مے

سَتہٕ وٚری شے لولہٕ وٲنج کَتر اُوتھ ژولہمو

**Raina (1989: 6) renders the verses as:**

Beholding you loveliness maddened me with longing.
How cruel you left me languishing with desire!
Faithless one! Your furtive look pierced my soul;
And my virgin, loving heart fluttered like a wounded bird.

**Mahjoor (1984: 106):**

مأری مَندِ چھَم چاٚنی لولہٕ بیمأری

لگیو بال پأری پأری یے

سُمہٕ بالہِ لوسَم گُمہٕ گوم جأری

یارَس پَتہٕ لأری لأری یے

روزِنا ساتھا بوزِ میٲنی زأری

لگیو بال پأری پأری یے

**Raina (1989: 9) translates it as under:**

The pangs of love are consuming me.
Beloved, I offer you my life
I'm bathed in sweat, with strength ebbed out,
Following my love over hill and dale.
Why can't he halt and hear my prayer?

However, in this distinctive quality he was preceded by

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Rasul Mir, and Mahjoor himself has acknowledged his debt to the former:

**Mahjoor (1984: 124):**

اَتھ دَرد صوٗرٕ زٕ پَرٕ دٕتُلتھ گووسہ رؤسُل میر
مہجور لأ گتھ آو بٕیہٕ دؤبارٕ أتی روز

**Raina (1989: 17) renders the above as:**

Rasul Mir, who unveiled love's gnawing pain,
Has come again, reborn as Mahjoor. Just wait and see!

**Mahjoor (1984:142):**

میٖر سُند پزون مَس لوٚد نوٚبن بانٛن
تی کٔنٛن تٚووٗ موے خانٛن مَنٛز
مہجورٕ بأ گراو پھر ژٕ پیمانٛن
جاے تُمٕ رٔٹ پُرستانٛن مَنٛز

**Raina (1989: 27) puts the above as under:**

Mir's old wine fills new cups now.
Stocks have reached all taverns for sale.
Pour it into glasses, Mahjoor, and serve!

It seems strange that in most of the poetry written before Mahjoor, Nature hardly found any place. It was Mahjoor who, for the first time, moved quite close to Nature depicting it in changing seasons with its myriad hues and contours. For the first time we had a poet who sang of his rose-garden-like moth-

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erland, its mountains, lakes, its flora and fauna, and thereby enlarging the canvas of Kashmiri poetry. The following verses of Mahjoor as translated by Raina and Kaul may be quoted in this connection:

**Mahjoor (1984: 247):**

نیہہ گٹہِ گوس بیدار کنن کُتی جہِ بولُن گوم
زونُم مے وِندِ سوریو پَرتو تر ووسونٹھ کالن
کَتہِ آو صُبحک واو، نیہہ گٹہِ کیاز باغس ژاو
روشہِ روشہِ پَکان مُشک ژھٹاں پوشہِ رُمالَن

**Raina (1989: 90):**

The song of the swallows woke me up
Well before early dawn.
I understood that winter's gone
And effulgent spring has come.
...

Who knows whence came the morning breeze,
And why so late at night,
Moving with slow, deliberate steps,
Sprinkling scent on the scarves of flowers!

**Mahjoor (1984: 266):**

گُلمرگہِ آلہِ پَتھرے نیلہِ ناگہِ گوگجہِ پَتھرے
مخمل بَہار وَتھرے گلشن وَطن چُھ سوئے

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سنبذ ولہٕ چھل ژتن مَن مانَس بلس دِاد تن
ہرَ موکھہٕ سُہ پانہٕ وُچھہَن گلشن وطن چُھ سونے

**Kaul (1988: 124):**

The spring has spread out velvet in
Gulmarg, Nila Nag and the two patheris.
Bathe in the Sind water, meditate in
Manasbal and see God on Harmukh

**Mahjoor (1984: 259):**

کونگہٕ پوشہٕ حُسنکہٕ بوشہٕ ڈالتھ ہوشہٕ مَدنوار
چُھکھ روشہٕ بہتھ یاوِنکے جوشہٕ ژھٹاں نار

**Raina (1989: 98):**

O saffron flower! Sitting in silent meditation
And radiating the fire of youth
Many a famed beauty swoons
Seeing your amazing, flaming form.

**Mahjoor (1984: 319):**

پوشہٕ نولو ہوشہٕ سان روز وَنہٕ دزاوپیہٕ سونتھ آو
رَنگہٕ رَنگہٕ پھولی پوش باغَس نیرژتہٕ گلزار چھاو

**Raina (1989: 105) renders the above verse as:**

O golden oriole, winter's gone,
Gay spring has come again!
Step out and feast your weary eyes
On myriad flowers abloom.

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In order to impart vitality, and freshness to his poetry, Mahjoor turned his attention to the apparently ordinary aspects of day-to-day life. Two of his celebrated poems, *baghi nishat ke gulo* and *poshi vuni baghuch poshi gondariye* mirror this new turn in the poet's imagination. This was an extraordinary departure from the earlier romantically imaginative world towards the mundane beauties of his land and people. Instead of earlier fairy lands, he now appreciates the rose blooming in the well known Nishat garden, situated in Srinagar, the central city of the valley of Kashmir:

**Mahjoor (1984: 37):**

باغِ نِشاطہٕ کے گُلو ناز گراں گراں وولو

...

سأَلہ ڈَلکُ ژٕ وُچھ بَہار باغِ نشاط و شالمار

چُشمہٕ زٕ تھاوِمے تَیار تارٕ تَراں تَراں وولو

**Raina (1989: 19) renders it this way:**

Flower garden of Nishat Bagh,
Come with your graces,
See, spring has come
To Dal, Nishat and Shalimar,
O, use these aching eyes as boats!
Come rowing across!

Likewise, instead of pouring out his emotions for imaginary beloveds living in fairy lands or praising the exotic beloveds of classic Persian like, Laila and Zuleika or Azra and Shirin, he fervently showers praises on an ordinary rustic girl (*grees kuur*):

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**Mahjoor (1984: 13):**

پوشہِ وِنہِ باغچ پوشہِ گوندٕرِ یے  گرٕیسی کوٚرِ نازنین سوندٕرِ یے

...

سیوٚ دسادِ جلمہِ چھی شلمہِ سوندٕرِ یے  نہ زِ چُھے گوٹہِ نے زٕرِ یے

کاژِ زوٚنہِ چھی کالہِ اوٚبرٕ کٹھرِ یے  گرٕیسی کوٚرِ نازنین سوندٕرِ یے

...

ژٕے تہِ خوجہِ بایَن چھابرائرِ یے  ژٕے گُلن ہَتی دِلبرِ یے

خوجہِ بابہِ ترٕوٚ پرٕتھ دارِ تہِ بٕرِ یے  گرٕیسی کوٚرِ نازنین سوندٕرِ یے

**Raina (1989: 23) translates the poem as under:**

Bouquet from Beauty's everlasting garden,
Heemall of Heaven or Caucassian fairy,
O peasant girl, what grace! What beauty!

...

Exquisite beauty, how simple is your attire,
With neither flashy border nor brocade!
O bright Kartik moon, draped in black clouds!
O peasant girl, what grace! What beauty!

...

What gulfs between you and high-born dames!
You are the soul of freedom and flowers,
And the dames languish in shuttered prisons.

It will not be out of place to mention here that it was Mahjoor's concern with the ordinary and day-to-day aspects of life that according to Azad (1984) earned him the title 'Wordswoth of Kashmir' by the Nobel Laureate Rabindernath Tagore.

According to Chamam Lal Chaman (1987), one thing which distinguishes Mahjoor from most Kashmiri poets before him is his attachment to his local environment. This quality gives

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novelty and freshness even to his traditional love poetry. A couple of verses from his earlier songs make it evident:

**Mahjoor (1984: 92):**

ژھل کرِتھ ژۆل ژۆر ہانژل، ۆنی دِمس پُڑی یے مَحل
بَڈ ڈَلہِ چھا، تیل بَلہِ چھا، باغِ شالامار چھا
چھس وَدَن زأَلتھ بَدن رووُم مَدن ژۆل سَر حَدن
پژنگ چھا یا درنگ چھا یا برنگ چھا کُٹہار چھا

He sneaked away from me to far off places shouldn't I look for him across the fairyland
But who knows where he actually is at Dal-lake, Telbal or Shalimaar
To caress my burning heart I have recourse to nothing but my tears
Oh! Could I know where he in fact is- at Prang, Drang, Brang or Kotehaar.

**Mahjoor (1984: 267):**

دودِ پتھرِ پادشاہ تار اَشہِ تارِ اَکھ دَما پژار
گُل ڈیشہکھ ژِ بے خار گُلشن وَطن چُھ سونے
سوکھہِ ناگ، توسہِ مأدان تَتہِ وُچھ مے پانہِ بگوان
بگتَن چُھ جَلوِ ہاوان گُلشن وَطن چُھ سونے

**Kaul (1988: 124):**

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Spend some moments at Doda Patheri
And the Tars where roses are thornless
In Sokha Nag and Tosa I saw
God revealing His face to the devotees.

Nishat Ansari (1987) reports, that his attachment to his local environment later on developed into his passionate love for his homeland and his Kashmiri compatriots which made him the first ever patriotic Kashmiri poet who passionately sang in praise of his birthplace. In one of his very famous poems namely, *gulshan watan chu sonuy*, he rapturously expresses his love for his flowerful birthplace:

**Mahjoor (1984: 266):**

بُلبُل وَنان چُھ پوشَن گُلشن وَطن چُھ سوئے

...

أندی أندی سفید سَنگر دیوارِ سَنگِ مَرمَر
مَنز باگ سَبز گوہَر گُلشن وَطن چُھ سوئے

...

وِرِکیی تہٕ ٹیکہٕ بَٹنے سُلہِ آے جاے رَٹنے
لگی ٹوٗری جامہٕ ژَٹنے گُلشن وَطن چُھ سوئے

...

مہجورٕ دیس سوئے باغاہ چُھ نُندِ بونے
اَتھ لول گوٚژھ بَروئے گُلشن وَطن چُھ سوئے

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بَڈ ڈَلہِ چھا، تیل بَلہِ چھا، باغِ شالامار چھا
چھَس وَدَن زأَلِتھ بَدن روۆم مَدن ژۆل سَر حَدن
پرنگ چھا یا درنگ چھا یا برنگ چھا کُٹہار چھا

He sneaked away from me to far off places shouldn't I look for him across the fairyland
But who knows where he actually is at Dal-lake, Telbal or Shalimaar
To caress my burning heart I have recourse to nothing but my tears
Oh! Could I know where he in fact is- at Prang, Drang, Brang or Kotehaar.

**Mahjoor (1984: 267):**

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گُل ڈیشہکھ ژِ بے خار — گُلشن وَطن چُھ سونے
سوکھہِ ناگ، توسہِ ماُدان — تَتہِ وُچھ مے پانہِ بگوان
بگتَن چُھ جَلوِ ہاوان — گُلشن وَطن چُھ سونے

**Kaul (1988: 124):**

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Spend some moments at Doda Patheri
And the Tars where roses are thornless
In Sokha Nag and Tosa I saw
God revealing His face to the devotees.

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**Mahjoor (1984: 266):**

بُلبُل وَنان چُھ پوشَن گُلشن وَطن چُھ سونُے

...

أندی أندی سفید سَنگر دیوارِ سَنگِ مَرمَر
مَنز باگ سَبز گوہَر گُلشن وَطن چُھ سونُے

...

وِرِیمی تہٕ ٹیکہٕ بَٹنے سُلہِ آے جاے رَٹنے
لگی ٹوٗری جامہٕ ژَٹنے گُلشن وَطن چُھ سونُے

...

مہجورٕ دیس سونُے باغاہ چُھ نُندِ بونُے
اَتھ لول گوٗژھ بَروُنے گُلشن وَطن چُھ سونُے

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**Raina (1989: 101) renders the above as under:**

The bulbul sings to the flowers:
'A garden is our land!'
...
Like walls of white marble,
The mountain peaks enclose
A sunny space of emerald green,
A garden is our land!
...
Mahjoor, our motherland
Is the loveliest on earth!
Shall we not love her best?
A garden is our land.

Naji Munawwar and Shafi Shauq (1992) state that, Mahjoor was the first ever Kashmiri poet who raised a powerful voice against the tyranny suffered by the Kashmiri people at large and called attention to the political subjugation, economic exploitation of the Kashmiri masses and the resultant penury which had left them utterly dazed. Mahjoor felt the urge somehow to change the sad situation and to shatter the mental, political and economic manacles of the time. It was during this period of his poetic career that Mahjoor felt the impact of political struggle for the freedom of Kashmir from the aristocratic and tyrannical Dogra rule. Mahjoor was attracted by this struggle, and through his various poems he tried to jolt the down-trodden out of their centuries-old slumber and to infuse in them a burning desire for freedom from subjugation and to evoke in them a deep yearning for political, social and economic freedom. Taing (1996) states that, being conscious of the urgent need for freedom and progress, Mahjoor provided the people an awakening peep into the past history of Kashmir when the land enjoyed its political independence and cultural richness. In one of his famous poems, *kache zuun boz miyeen zeereyey*, he speaks of Kashmir's past glory when Kashmir enjoyed a free and independent status:

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**Mahjoor (1984: 65):**

نازنین سوندری رازِ کُمأری  کاژِ زۄنی بوز میأنی زأری یے

...

بُترأژستی چھے پرأنی رازدأری  پرأنی سأنی زانہک سأری یے

تم أسی موکلی تہٕ أسی چھِ سرکأری  کاژِ زۄنی بوز میأنی زأری یے

...

یادِے آسی سأنی گاٹہٕ جأری  وَقتہٕ اکہِ کُر مُلکُ دأری یے

اَزِ وِچھان آسکھ سأنی نابکأری  کاژِ زۄنی بوز میأنی زأری یے

**Kaul (1988: 134) renders the verses in the following words:**

O lovelorn moon! O beautiful
Princess! Wait awhile and listen
To my tale of woe I shall
Surrender my life to you.
...
You have kept the secrets of the
Earth for ages. You know all
Our ancestors who were lords
While we are only hirelings.
...
Do you remember how wise
We were once when we had
Large empires? Now you must
Be watching our worthlessness!

As a result of this consciousness, his poetry turned into a cheerful clarion call for national and cultural regeneration. He expressed his deep sorrow about the present political and cultural abjectness in these words:

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**Mahjoor (1984: 99):**

دوہَس زُوجاں ژٹھِ شامَن أڈِے ژوٚٹ چھُم دِواں مأکِلک
گَمَس رأضی بُہ، سُہ میأنِس غَمَس تَن دار آسُن گوٚژھ

...

میون بٔڈی بَب مال و جان ہیتھ تژامہٕ پأنَسن کِنہٕ آو
مال ہورُم، جان چھُم باقٕے کڈاں وٚچھتو حِساب

**Kaul (1988: 132) translates the verses as under:**

After day long toil, I have to
Contend with the half-meal
The master doles out. He should
Have awakened to my plight!
My grandfather's life, property
Were mortgaged for a mere penny.
The loan that I toiled all my
Life to repay, is still uncleared.

Jayalal Kaul (1968) reports, that Mahjoor urged people to action, to work out their own salvation and be ready to face hardships that might befall them. The poem *waloo haa baagwaano* expressing such emotions became the defacto national anthem of the Kashmir freedom movement:

**Mahjoor (1984: 214):**

وولوہا باغوانو نَو بہارٕک شان پیدا گر
پھولَن گُل، گٹھ کرن بُلبُل، تٕتھی سامان پیدا گر

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چَمن وأراں، رِواں شبنم، زٹھ جامہٕ پریشان گُل
گُلن تے بُلبُلن اندر دُبارٕ جان پیدا گر

...

گری گُس بُلبلا آزاد پنجرس منٛز ژ نالاں چھکھ
ژ پَنَے دَستہٕ پِنہِن مُشکِلن آسان پیدا گر

...

چھِ باغَس جانِور بولاں، مگر آواز چھکھ بیٚون بیٚون
ژ تِہندِس آیِوس یارَب اَثر یگسان پیدا گر
اگر وُزناوِہَن بُستی گُلن ہِنز، تراو زِیرو بَم
بُنیٚل گر، واو گر، گگرایہٕ گر، طوٗفان پیدا گر

**Raina (1989: 112) puts the above verses as:**

Arise, O Gardner! And usher in
The glory of a new spring.
Create conditions for 'bulbul' to
Hover over full-blown roses.
Dew bemoans the garden's desolation.
Harassed roses have torn their garments.
Infuse new life into flowers and 'bulbuls'.
...
Who will free you, O 'bulbul',
While you bewail in the cage?
With your own hands, work out
Your own salvation.
...
In the garden many birds sing

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But their notes are varied.
May God harmonize these
Into one effective melody.

This extraordinary and obvious change in Mahjoor's thought didn't come about all of a sudden. Mahjoor was quite conscious of what he was doing. He (1984: 155) himself invited his reader's attention to this significant development in his creative process by saying:

لولہٕ سازَس تازِ لے ہتھ آے مہجورٕنی غزل
کیاہ وَناں گس کُن وَناں ژٕتہِ وُچھرِ ہے، زانہہ پٔرٕی زِہے

**Raina (1989: 35) translates the above verse as under:**

Mahjoor's ghazals play fresh tunes on the harp of love.
You could read them to know to whom he sings and what he sings.

All the eminent literary scholars like Jayalal Kaul, T.N. Kaul, Taing, Naji Munawar and Shouq agree that we owe a debt to Mahjoor for keeping alive Kashmiri poetry at a time when very few people considered Kashmiri literature as a subject of serious study, as the language itself had no place in Kashmir's educational curriculum. Urdu and English, introduced as they were in the last decade of the 19th century, ousted Persian from its pre-eminent position which it enjoyed in schools and government offices. It was in this atmosphere that Mahjoor began writing in Kashmiri. This decision of his stands testimony to his clarity of thought and maturity of judgment. Not only this, Mahjoor even made persistent efforts to persuaded some of his contemporaries like Abdul Ahad Azad (20th century) and Abdul Sattar 'Aasi' (20th century) to give up writing in Urdu and instead to switch over to their mother tongue, Kashmiri, which, according to Mahjoor, "remained a helpless neglected language". It will

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not out of place to imagine Mahjoor being inspired in this regard by one of his predecessors, Krishnajoo Razdan (1984: 479), who had for the first time drawn his readers' attention to the importance of the Kashmiri language saying:

وَنے دیوِیہِ چھے کاشُر زبوے ٹاٹھ
پَرَکھ، بوزَکھ ژِ یِلہِ کاٹھس بَنی کاٹھ

May I tell you that the Deity holds high in esteem only the Kashmiri Language
When you will read Kashmiri or listen to it, you will get the horse' saddle as your seat in place of the gallows.

The following verse of Mahjoor is evidently reminiscent of Razdaan's verse:

بُلبُلَن دوٚپ گُلَس حُسن چھے پوٚر
کیاہ وَنے زبو چھے نہٕ سُے چھے قصوٚر
بے زَباں یِتہِ چھنہٕ زِندِ روزان
مارِ مَتہِ! وارِ وَتہِ لاگ میون پان

**Translated by Raina (1989: 76) it means the following in English:**

The bulbul to the flower: 'Superb is your beauty,
But for one deficiency-you don't have speech!
And no one survives here without this gift!'

Being a very prominent and one of the most popular lyrical poets of the first half of the 20th century, Mahjoor has been drawing attention of both Kashmiri and non-Kashmiri schol-

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ars. We find his poetry being translated into various languages such as Urdu, Hindi and English. Mahjoor has been translated into Urdu, among others, by Sultan Haq Shaheedi published under the title *Kulyaat-i-Mahjoor* (2009), and some of the poems of Mahjoor have been translated into Hindi by Dr. Ratan Lal Shant which are included in an anthology entitled *Ujal Raaj Marg* (2005). However, the first attempt at translating Mahjoor into English is found referred to by Taing (1992: 38) wherein he states that, "Pandit Neranjan (a Kashmiri Forest Assistant Settlement Officer) translated into English Mahjoor's *Jung-e-German* (one of Mahjoor's earlier Kashmiri poems supporting the British against the Germans in World War I) as early as around 1915". Another statement about Mahjoor's renderings in English is made by Azad (1984), according to whom Professor Davinder Sethyarthy (a disciple of Rabinder Nath Tagore) got Mahjoor's popular lyric *poshe mate janaanoo* translated into English by a certain unnamed scholar knowing both English and Kashmiri and managed to publish that Kashmiri poem and its English translation along with his own introductory remarks in a well known journal of the time, namely, *Modern Review* in 1934 (published in Calcutta). Sometime later Pandit Anand Kaul Bamzi translated into English Mahjoor's *grees kuur* and *poshe mate janaanoo* and got it published in *Vishvabhatri Quarterly* (published in Calcutta).

Apart from the earlier attempts hinted at above, the task of translating a considerable number of Mahjoor's Kashmiri poetry was first taken up as a project by T.N. Kaul in 1982 which saw print in 1988 under the title *Poems of Mahjoor* followed by Trilokinath Raina's two anthologies: a) *An Anthology of Modern Kashmiri Verse* (1972) and b) *The Best of Mahjoor* (1989). Underlying the reason and purpose behind his endeavour to translate Mahjoor into English, T.N. Kaul in his introduction to *The Poems of Mahjoor* points out, firstly, that "even as a child I was

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so charmed by the poetic beauty of Mahjoor and his simplicity of diction, that I knew his poems by rote that perhaps explains why I selected him for my first big venture in the service of Kashmiri literature". Secondly, he says that the sole purpose behind his endeavour is to "project the image of Mahjoor, a great and popular poet of Kashmir, to the outside world". Especially, because "so far no concerted effort has been made to present to the readers outside Kashmir a picture of his work and personality in its totality and also the philosophy of his life". Raina, on his part, in his preface to *An Anthology of Modern Kashmiri Verse* hints that the desire behind his endeavour to translate modern Kashmiri poetry including that of Mahjoor is to "help people (outside Kashmir) understand modern Kashmir, instead of considering it merely as a tourist paradise".

Mahjoor's poetry was published during his life time under three different titles, namely, *Kalaam-i-Mahjoor* (A work of Mahjoor in Kashmiri which consists of 12 booklets including 73 love songs and lyrics), *Payaam-i-Mahjoor* (A work of Mahjoor in Kashmiri comprising 6 booklets covering patriotic songs and songs of socio-political nature) and *Salaaam-i-Mahjoor* (A booklet of Mahjoor in Kashmiri containing religious and devotional songs). Out of these three only the first two have attracted the attention of T.N. Kaul and Trilokinath Raina and, as such the present study will remain confined to the translated works only.

1. T.N. Kaul's *Poems of Mahjoor* contain the English renderings of fifty nine poems of Mahjoor.
2. Trilokinath Raina's *An Anthology of Modern Kashmiri Verse* contains English renderings of ten poems of Mahjoor.
3. Trilokinath Raina's *The Best of Mahjoor* contains English renderings of sixty seven poems of Mahjoor.

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# Chapter – III

## A Comparative Study of the Original Kashmiri Poems and their English Renderings

The main objective of the present chapter is to undertake a comparative study of the original and the translated. The original is Mahjoor's Kashmiri poetry and the translated comprises the two English renderings of the original by T. N. Kaul and Trilokinath Raina.

The present Chapter intends to ascertain the extent to which the translated versions have succeeded in reproducing the original thematic substance along with its emotional, cultural and historical reverberations.

The major themes dealt with in Mahjoor's poetry are romantic, political-cum-patriotic, existentialist and devotional in nature. The romantic poems represent the initial phase of his poetic career. They are dominated by various shades and situations of mundane human love. They mirror a lover's intense yearnings, feelings of estrangement, anguish, sufferings and despondency born out of separation from the loved one. It needs be pointed out here that, adhering to the age-old tradition of Kashmiri poetry, Mahjoor in most of his love-lyrics presents the lover as a female and the beloved as a male.

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The political-cum-patriotic poems represent the later phase of Mahjoor's poetic career. They talk about the political issues related to the poet's times—poverty, economic exploitation and political subjugation that the Kashmiri people faced under the autocratic and tyrannical Dogra rule. In many of these poems, he urges the Kashmiri people to rise against the tyrannical rule and start a struggle for their freedom and prosperity. In his patriotic poems, Mahjoor sings passionately in praise of his motherland and invites the attention of his compatriots to the manifold natural beauty and the past historical glory of the land.

One more noteworthy theme of the poet is existentialism, an approach dealing with the human predicament in the universe around. This existentialist concern, however, finds expression in only one poem of the poet, entitled *yemberzal* (Narcissus).

Another prominent theme of the poet is devotional and religious in nature. These poems include, for instance, the supplication to God opening with *sahibo sath cham mei chainey wath mei aslich haavetam* and encomiums in praise of Prophet Muhammed (S.A.W.) beginning with the hemistich *kotero waatakh tse yeli bar roza-i-khair-ul-anaam, aas laaraan yaa shahi kaunain, aas bar tal kas kharey boze zaarey yaa rasool.* It may, however, be pointed out here that the translation of the poems falling under this category has not been attempted by our translators.

The importance of these themes, apart from their aesthetic significance, lies mainly in the fact that the poet embeds them in the particular sensibility, culture and history of Kashmir, and thereby mirrors various aspects of the life of the Kashmiri community. In the love-poetry, for instance, we find a love-lorn maiden behaving like a traditional Kashmiri woman, who, in order to get access to and win over her beloved, seeks the help of *pirs* (holy men) and *faqirs* (dervishes). Similarly, like a sentimental lover, she suspects her rivals in love trying to estrange her beloved from her by means of using amulets. She ties vo-

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tive rags at sacred shrines for fulfillment of her wish and consults astrologers for predicting the auspicious hour when she would be able to enjoy the company of her beloved. Imagining the yearned opportunity of meeting her beloved being fulfilled, she plans to delight him by offering him specific Kashmiri sweets and dry fruits like *qand* (sugar loaf), *naabad* (a special sugar candy made by boiling sugar and water together and left for settling in an earthen pot), *aele* (cardamom), etc—these are the traditional Kashmiri ways of welcoming the guest. Further, in many of his love-poems we find Mahjoor using local myths and folk-lore by presenting the lover and the beloved as one or the other character occurring in those myths and folk-lore. For instance, in some of these poems, he metaphorically talks of the lover as Heemaal and speaks of the beloved as Nagirai (the two lovers in the famous Kashmiri folk-tale *Heemaal-Nagirai*). In some others, he describes the lover as *yemberzal* and the beloved as *bumber* [a Kashmiri myth about *yemberzal*'s (The Narcissus) love for *bumber* (the beetle)]. Again, in a few other lyrics the poet metaphorically speaks of the love-lorn maid as *masval* and *aarval* (names of two local Kashmiri flowers) as under:

یارِ دادِ وآ ژِس نِشہ مَستانَن  دَشہِ مے گنجم اَستانَن مَنّز
نیہَ گٹہِ ژھورُم پیرِستانَن  جاے تُمی رٔٹ پُرستانن مَنّز

In the agony of separation, I visited faqirs,
Tied votive rags in various shrines,
Sought him on dark nights in the pir's abode.

لٲنی نچھہِ پُتّرے ساتھ وُچھنوُم  کَر سَنامے تہٕ تَس گژھ مِلہٕ ژار
بُل گوو جوتشِس حِساب روُم  کُمی روشِنوُم پوشہِ موّت یار

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I wanted to know from the horoscope
The date when he and I would meet.
But the jyotshi went wrong, and I was lost.

قَند تہٕ نابَد اَلہٕ سُپٲری  تھاوس چَندٕ بُری بٲری یے
پیٚہٕ نا گرٕہَس بَندٕ بردٲری  لگہٕ یو بال پٲری پٲری یے

Should he return, I shall
Serve him like a slave, with
Cardamom and betel-nuts.

یہٕ پَرَمَس یارٕ گُمی چوٗکھ  ژٕ غٲرن سَتی مَلہٕ نوٗکھ
گُرِتھ تٔعوپذ بزٕمروٗکھ  گُمیو آرَے وَلے بوٚمبرو

Who used intoxicants to make you
Befriend my mortal foe?
And who used talismans
To lure you away from me?

تَمنا چانہٕ دیدارُک مےٚ چُھم یٔمبرزَلے بوٚمبرو
پھوٚجِس یامَتھ لَجِس وُچھنے جُجِس چانے گلے بوٚمبرو

In the flush of youth I
Fell in love and pined for
A glimpse of you, as the
Narcissus craves for the beetle.

ژٕے رؤس آرٕوَلہٕ دوہ گذٲرِم گنڈبن پیٹھ
ژٕس ہَرٕدٕ بزٕونہہ دَرٕدٕکے آمہٕ تاوَے

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Without you, like the arawal, I passed my days on thorns,
And the fire of love blighted me well before autumn came.

مَسوَل ئِہ آیَس ٹُکرِ جِگرِکی پیشکُشی ہٮتھ
ٮٛیٖہِ کیاہ ئِہ اَنَے چُھم یٖتُے سَرمایہِ وَنَے کیاہ

I've come to offer you I have—
The pieces of a broken heart.
Alas! Like the masval, that's all I have!—
How shall I tell you?

نُندِ بانہِ دلبرِ میانہِ وُنتھس مایہِ وَنَے کیاہ
ہیمال کُرتھس ضایہِ ناگیرایہِ وَنَے کیاہ

How shall I tell you, O beautiful one.
A Heemaal, enmeshed in your love
Is pining, wasting away for you—
O Naagiray, how shall I tell you?

Moreover, the lover, while trying to guess where her beloved could be putting up, names various local geographical locations as below:

ژھلِ کُرتھ ژوٗل ژوٗر ہانژوٗل، وُنی دِمَس پُڑی یے مَحَل
ٮٛڈ ڈلہٕ چھا، تیل بلہٕ چھا، باغِ شالامار چھا

He slipped out by subtle stealth, but I'll seek him out
In his favourite haunts—Pari Mahal, Telbal, Dal or Shalamar.

In his politically oriented poems, too, we find Mahjoor presenting his subject silhouetted against the political and historical background of Kashmir. For instance, he talks of local

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historic luminaries like Lalitaditya (an illustrious Kashmiri ruler), Lal Ded and Ghani Kashmiri (two great poets of Kashmir), Tazi Bhat (a great Kashmiri general), Rahmaan Mir (an exemplary Kashmiri army officer), Qude Gojawari and Siraj Kaak (two prominent social activists of Kashmir) and urges Kashmiri people to seek inspiration from them and rise against their subjugating rulers. In another politically oriented poem, *sangarmaalan pyov pragaash,* we find the poet celebrating his optimistic vision of a free and prosperous Kashmir by referring to burning of rue, a Kashmiri custom observed on all happy occasions. Below are a few instances of this kind:

دُبارِ عالَمس منز کاشِرٕ ہُند ناو گرٛژھ روشَن
ژٕ للتادَت تہٕ تازی بَٹ، مُبارَک خان پیدا کر

Kashmiris' fame will again
Spread in the world if you
Create luminaries like Tazi Bhat,
Lalitaditya and Mubarak Khan.

گرَن سَرخَم ژٕے کُن اَہلِ اَدب ایران وشیراز کٕ
غنی ہیوٚ بیاکھ کانہہ جادُو بَیاں اِنسان پیدا کر

Litterateurs of Iran will bow
To you in reverence if you
Create a poet with powers of
Magical narration like Ghani.

کوٚر بَٹس پَتھ زُو فِدا قُدٕ گوجوأرٕ

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اَز تِمے گتھہٕ یاد پأوِو پانہٕ وأنی

Quda Gojawari sacrificed his life for a Kashmiri Pandit
Recollect together those events once again today.

بۆ ہوذُر، شیر دِل گُنزراوِنے' بٕیٖہِ کوبلی، تُرکی
ژٕ رحمان میر ہیوٕ کانژھا دوٗیم کپتان پیدا کر

If you produce a second captain like Rahmaan Mir
You will be admired as a brave person like a Turk or a Kabuli.

گُلِ آفتابَن موہر لَرِ تھالَن لولِکہِ اَسمانہٕ ہٮ٘ٹھ آو راش
اِسبَند زولُس أمی گُل لالَن سَنگر مالَن پیوو پرٕاگاش

The sunflower has arranged her plates
With gold coins from love's firmaments.
The tulip with his incense wishes him joy.

In his patriotic poems Mahjoor invites his readers' attention towards the local geographical beauties of his motherland as under:

وُچھ لولٕوٗک ژٕ مأداں سَر سَبز کوہ بیاباں
موٗمتی چھِ زِندِ سَپدان گُلشن وطن چُھ سوٗنے

The Lolab Valley, its sylvan hills and
Woods bring the dead back to life.

سوکھہ ناگ، توسہٕ مأداں تَتہِ وُچھ مے پانہٕ بگوان
بگتَن چُھ جَلوٕ ہاواں گُلشن وطن چُھ سوٗنے

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In Sokha Nag and Tosa Maidan I saw
God revealing His face to the devotees.

Evidently, translation of such a Kashmiri poetry into English will be difficult, chiefly because of the difference in cultures, customs and sensibilities found in the two communities speaking those languages. This being the case, translators of Mahjoor will find it hard to carry over duly the feelings expressed in the original, especially the feelings that are closely related to the local traditions, customs, heroes, topography, and the specific beliefs and attitudes of Kashmiris towards life. To substantiate the point, we may consider the following verses of Mahjoor and see how the two translators have handled them:

گُلِ آفتابَن موہر لَرِ تھالَن  لولِکہِ اَسمانہِ ہتھ آو راش
اِسبَنڈ زولُس اَمی گُل لالَن  سَنگر مالَن پیوو پَڑاگاش

**Kaul has translated it as:**

The sunflower filled plates with
Gold coins: this wealth it got
From the heaven of love. The tulip
Burnt incense to celebrate this.

**Raina has rendered it as under:**

The sunflower has arranged her plates
With gold coins from love's firmaments.
The tulip with his incense wishes him joy.

The above verses from *sangarmaalan pyov pragaash* contain an allusion to a particular Kashmiri custom of burning rue on

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all happy occasions. Since this custom is not observed by the English, the translators have been obliged to add to the basic original idea expressions like 'to celebrate this' (Kaul) and 'wishes him joy' (Raina). However, in spite of these explanatory expressions, none of the two English versions has succeeded in conveying the real import of the original expression related to the custom.

Another example of how the translators have handled a subject related to a local folk-tale:

نأگی راے ژۆلمے ناگہٕ سَبزأری  لارَس پَتہٕ أری أری یے

ہیمال وَجَسے ثُہندی امأری  لگہٕ یو بال پأری پأری یے

**Kaul has translated it as:**

Like Nagrai, he fled over the
Green banks. Like Himaal
I go in his hot pursuit
Along every hill-stream

**Raina (1989:9) renders it as:**

He has gone along the green bank.
But I'll pursue him down every stream,
Like Heemal in search of Naagiray.

The verse presents the lover and the beloved metaphorically as Heemaal and Nagirai. Obviously, any reader not familiar with the folk-tale of *Heemal-Nagirai* will find it hard to understand and appreciate the verse. In face of this hurdle the two translators could not but have recourse to explaining the two names Heemaal and Nagirai either by means of giving footnotes: 'Nagrai and Himaal are the hero and heroine of a mythological Kashmiri folk-tale' (as done by Kaul) or by providing

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the required meaning in the glossary: 'Heemal is the heroine of the famous Kashmiri folk-tale *Heemal Nagiray*. Beloved of the serpent king, Nagiray' and 'Nagiray is the name of the hero of Kashmiri folk-tale *Heemal Nagiray*, the serpent king who had fallen in love with Heemal' (as done by Raina). In the light of these explanatory notes one can expect any reader to appreciate to some extent the purport of the verse.

Another instance presenting the difficulty of translation is the following verse:

بُلبُل لولہِ اَفسانہِ ہیچھنووُم  وَنہِ وَنہِ میانہِ گے گُل بیدار
مَنہِ کے کوٚستوٚر بے خبر تھووُم  کمی روشنووُم پوشہ موٚت یار

**Kaul (1988:88)has rendered it as under:**

I taught the 'bulbul' to sing,
My song awakened the flowers.
All the while the bird of my heart
Was left unattended by me.

**Raina (1989:50) puts it as:**

I taught the bulbul songs of love—
Songs that woke up all the flowers.
But I ignored the bird of mind!

The above verse alludes to a distinct form of group-singing known as *wanvun* performed by Kashmiri female-folk on certain special happy occasions such as a marriage ceremony. Both the translators have rendered the expression *wanvun* simply as 'song', but the word 'song' does not carry over wholly the specific manner and feelings associated with the act of singing in unison called *wanvun*.

**Another instance is:**

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**Mahjoor (1982:44):**

لولہِ چانہِ راتس کُرمے بیدآری　　لۄٚسس کونگ ژآری ژآری یے

زۄنہِ نیر وُچھنے میأنٛ گُلکآری　　لگہِ یو بال پآری پآری یے

The verse presents the lover (traditionally a female in Kashmiri poetry) suffering pangs of separation from her beloved (traditionally a male in Kashmiri poetry). In order to assuage her pain and beguile the tedium of time, the lover selects to pick flowers in a saffron field under the moon-lit night, and while doing so invites imaginatively her beloved to come and joyfully watch her activity. Now this act of picking saffron flowers under the moonlight is a peculiar joyful activity of Kashmiri people, an activity that can hardly be appreciated by a non-Kashmiri.

**The verse is translated by Kaul as:**

I keep vigil to sift
Saffron the whole night,
Come out in the moonlight
And see my handiwork.

**Raina (1989:9) has rendered it thus:**

Sleep has forsaken me. I use the night
To pick love's saffron from the flowers.
Come in the moonlight to see my art.

With a view to make their renderings understandable, both Kaul and Raina have respectively added the following explanatory footnotes to their versions: 'Saffron buds in bloom present a bewitching sight when seen in moonlight' and 'Saffron fields are a glorious sight in the moonlight, particularly on Kartik Purnima'. However, in spite of these additions, both the

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versions do not succeed in conveying desirably the aesthetic beauty of the flower-picking custom.

Realizing the fact that Mahjoor's poems that have been translated by both Kaul and Raina is large our study will confine itself only to a few poems that can serve as samples of the major themes dealt with by the poet and which also include several verses deeply embedded in the particular Kashmiri culture and history. The selected poems, seven in number, are as follows:

1. *grees kuur* (*Country Lass*)
2. *vuzmal* (*Lightning*)
3. *nund bani dilbar miyani* (*The Melting Avalanche*)
4. *yemberzal* (*Narcissus*)
5. *sangarmaalan pyov pragaaash* (*Dawn*)
6. *waloo haa baagwaano* (*Arise O Gardener!*)
7. *Aazaedi* (*Freedom*)

These selected poems fall thematically under three categories: a) romantic, b) existentialist and c) political-cum-patriotic. The romantic category includes the following three poems:

1. *grees kuur.* It is an eulogy in praise of an ordinary peasant girl approached from a romantic angle and lauded for her free and simple life-style as compared with the aristocratic women.
2. *vuzmal.* It presents a natural phenomenon, lightning, as a lovely young lady with all her physical charms and gay of disposition.
3. *nund bani dilbar miyani.* It deals with a female lover's pangs of separation from her beloved and her burning desire for union with him.

The poem under existentialist category is:

1. *yemberzal.* In it we find a well-known Kashmiri flower,

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*yemberzal* presented symbolically as a human being facing his predicament in the universe around.

The poems selected under political-cum-patriotic are the following three:

1. *sangarmaalan pyov prgaash*. It presents the poet's optimistic vision of his motherland, Kashmir as a place freed from the tyrannical autocratic rule and enjoying freedom and prosperity.
2. *waloo haa baagwaano*. It is a clarion call given to the Kashmiri people urging them to rise and start a struggle for the well-being of their birthplace.
3. *Aazaedi*. It is a pungent satire on the political situation obtaining in Kashmir after India's Freedom from the British rule in 1947, which the poet felt discomforting and ugly.

Each poem thus selected is discussed and compared with their translation under the following three sections: a) thematic analysis, b) structural analysis and c) comparative analysis. This division into various sections is done in order to address chiefly the following issues:

- To get at the essential themes of the original Kashmiri poems in question and to see whether or not, or to what extent, those themes have been touched upon in the English versions thereof.
- To mark the prominent structural features of the original and evaluate the fidelity or freedom exercised by the two translators.
- To underline and explicate culturally and historically bound items in the original and see how they have been dealt with by the translators.
- To assess the English versions as pieces of creative writings as they stand in themselves.

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# 1. *Grees Kuur* (*Country Lass*)

## Thematic Concern

*Grees kuur* (*Country Lass*) is one of the most noteworthy poems of Mahjoor. It may be relevant to mention here that Mahjoor composed this poem when Kashmir was predominantly a feudal society and could not enjoy life as seemed possible only after freedom from the feudal Dogra rule. The core theme of the poem may be described as a eulogy in praise of a country-side peasant girl compared with urban and aristocratic women. The peasant girl is praised for her unadorned natural beauty, simple life-style, freedom from unhealthy feudal customs, restrictive social rites and her relish in physical labour. It is in view of this free life-style that the girl is admiringly compared with the feudalistic way of life which confined the aristocratic women-folk to their indoors and deprived them of the healthy and joyful freedom of life out of doors in the open air. It will be appropriate to mention here that it was this poem and some other poems (including those featuring Nature in Kashmir) dealing with various mundane and apparently ordinary aspects of day-to-day life which earned him the title of being the 'Wordsworth of Kashmir' from Rabindernath Tagore.

## Structure of the Poem

The original poem is couched in the well-know *vatsun* form of Kashmiri poetry. The form consists of various stanzas, each stanza comprising three lines followed by a refrain. The translators have however, deviated from the original pattern and

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given it a stanza-wise form without any refrain. Kaul's stanza consists of four lines each and that of Raina is made up of three lines. The refrain *grees kuur nazneen sondariye* in the original helps to create a song-like melody which in turn foregrounds the basic theme (the country lass) of the poem. Obviously, by dropping out the refrain, both the translations lack this peculiar melodic and foregrounding quality. Like most of the lyrics couched in the *vatsun* form, Kaul has undesirably put this poem too under his *ghazal* category, which shows that he does not recognize the structural difference between the two distinct genres of Kashmiri poetry, namely, the *ghazal* and the *vatsun*.

## Comparative Analysis

Though the poem in the original Kashmiri bears no title, Raina, as is usual with him, opens his translation of the poem with the opening line *poshi vuni baghuch poshe gondariye* of the original. However, Kaul entitles it as 'Country Lass' which duly epitomizes the central theme of the poem.

Following the age-old tradition of Kashmiri poetry, the poet has made use of such rhymes as create sonorous sounds and impart to the poem a pleasant euphony. For instance, the rhyme 'iye' in words like *gonderiye, dilbariye, sarsariye zargariye* etc. In addition to these, the poet also makes use of internal rhymes as well--for instance, 'jaa', 'shaa', 'naa', 'baa' in words *jaami, shaami, naagi* and *baagi*, 'rosh' and 'posh' in words like *roshe* and *poshe*, rhymes like 'gum' and 'bum' in the words *gumi* and *bumi* and the like. However, the translators have not chosen to make use of any such device of their own that could have helped them in re-creating, to a certain extent, the musicality of the original.

Looking at the English renderings of the poem closely, we find Kaul's renderings, at more than one place, turning out

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prosaic as the lines quoted below show:

1. O shapely, beautiful country
   Lass! You are like a
   Bouquet, a fairy on Caucasus
   Mountain or Himaal in heaven.

2. Your eyes are filled with water
   Of modesty and your pride is good
   Enough to make you brave. Even
   Fairies praise your coyness.

3. City dames can't equal you.
   While they shut themselves up
   In their apartments, you alone
   Are friendly with the flowers.

One wonders why Kaul has found it necessary to break up the above prose-like sentences into a seemingly poetic form. Some lines end somewhat clumsily--for instance, the second line of the first stanza ends in 'a', the third line of the second stanza with 'even' and the second line of the third stanza in 'up'. This obviously results in deflation of the tone of the original. It looks like rendering of a prose piece by force in poetic form. Raina's renderings, on the other hand, are poetic both in rhythm and tone as is clear from the following:

Bouquet from Beauty's everlasting garden,
Heemaal of Heaven or Caucassian fairy-
O peasant girl, what grace! What beauty!

O those gushing springs of bashfulness!
The houries envy your grace, and yet
You're framed in virtue, strong-souled maiden.

What gulfs between you and high-born damsels!
You are the soul of freedom and flowers,
While the dames languish in shuttered prisons.

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**The Kashmiri poem opens with the following stanza:**

پوشہِ وِنہِ باغچ پوشہِ گوندٕرِ یے
گرٛیسی کوٗرِ نازنِین سوندٕرِ یے
سورگچ ہیمالِ قافچ پٕرِ یے
گرٛیسی کوٗرِ نازنِین سوندٕرِ یے

**The stanza has been translated by Kaul as:**

O shapely, beautiful country
Lass! You are like a
Bouquet, a fairy on Caucasus
Mountain or Himaal in heaven.

**And Raina has rendered it as:**

Bouquet from Beauty's everlasting garden,
Heemal of Heaven or Caucassian fairy-
O peasant girl, what grace! What beauty!

The above verse presents the country lass metaphorically as Heemal and Caucassian fairy. However, both the metaphors incorporate two allusions. One referring to the famous Kashmiri legend about a princess named Heemal living in a Kashmiri village called Balapur. The princess happens to come in contact and fall in love with Nagirai, the snake prince from the netherworld. The other allusion refers to a myth about beautiful fairies living behind the Caucassian Mountain, and a strange group of Lilliput-like beings known as *Yaajooj Maajooj* trying in vain to reach the fairies by means of their licking up the mountain. It is doubtful whether a reader having no knowledge of the Kashmiri legend about Heemal and the myth related to the fairies found behind the Caucassian Mountain can duly appre-

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ciate the allusions. It is in view of this difficulty of communication that the translators have had recourse to either giving foot-notes (as Kaul has done) or providing explanatory notes in the glossary (as done by Raina).

**Another original stanza is:**

آزاد وَنچی پوشے تُھری یے
مُشکہٕ ستی ٹوٗری کُمی بٔری یے
سَتھ رنگ بخشی کُمی رَنگری یے
گرٛیسی کوٗری نازنین سوندٕری یے

**Kaul has rendered it as:**

O blossomed bough of the open
Woodland! Who filled your
Buds with scent? Which dyer
Bestowed seven hues on you?

**Raina puts it as under:**

Flowering plant in the woodland of freedom,
Who filled your buds with fragrance?
Whose brush painted you in gorgeous rainbow colours?

The original verse, presents the peasant girl metaphorically as a bush in open woodland adorned wonderfully by its colourful and fragrant blossom. Both the translators have duly communicated the charming image in the original. By retaining the sense of the original *rangur* as 'dyer', Kaul has followed the original closely. Raina, too, on his part has beautifully presented the dyer as a painter making skilful use of colours with his brush.

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Proceeding further, we find Kaul changing the metaphors like *shah pari* and *tuler* (underlined in the verse) occurring in the original into similes:

نیرُن پھیران چھکھے شاہ پُرِی یے
گوشن کرَ ہوا خوری یے
پوشن ویوُر ہیتھ وَسی تُلری یے
گرُپسی کوُری نازنین سوندُری یے

**Kaul has rendered the above verse as:**

You go about freely like a
Fairy queen. Breathe fresh air
In the woods. Like the bee,
Extract pollen from flowers.

On the other hand, Raina reasonably retains the metaphor *shah pari* as the 'queen of fairies' while changing the metaphor *tuler* into a simile ('like a honey bee') as Kaul has done:

Queen of the fairies, you roam in freedom
In glens and fragrant bowers,
Like a honey bee gathering pollen.

The change of the metaphor *tuler* into similes 'like the bee' (Kaul) and 'like a honey bee' (Raina) render the two expressions a little feeble because a simile, as a figure of speech, mostly remains confined to a single aspect of the object assimilated whereas a metaphor stands free of such limitations.

**The next original stanza is:**

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یاہوٗ پَران نیری کوتٔرٕی یے
باغَن پھیری رَنگہٕ ژٔرٕی یے
ناگہٕ سبزاٖرٕچ باغہٕ بیرٕٔی یے
گرٕپسی کوٗرٕی نازنیٖن سوندٔرٕی یے

**The verse has been translated by Kaul as:**

Sing 'Yahoo' like the dove
And cruise over the gardens like
The golden sparrow. You look
Ravishing by the spring verdure.

**Raina renders it as follows:**

With song on your lips, O bright song bird,
You glide among flowers, scattering fragrance,
Like sweet basil leaves growing wild on green banks.

Kaul has retained the original Kashmiri word *yahoo*, a term having religious overtones for the Muslim community (a term which the community uses at times while invoking God's help). Retention of the term as it appears in the source language text points to the difficulty of translating it into the target language. Raina has skipped this difficulty by ignoring the religious-specific term and has rendered it in the following straight manner 'With song on your lips, O bright song bird'.

**The next stanza of the original poem is:**

وَنہٕ وان وزٲیگھ پٮٹھ تھرٕزٔرٕی یے
وِگرٕنو شاباش کرٕٔرٕی یے

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چنگہٕ ساز وایاں چھکھے دبدری یے
گرٚپسی کوٚری نازنین سوندٚری یے

**Kaul puts it as:**

You come over the highland
Trotting, singing hymns and
Playing on the harp and
The sitar. Fairies clap you.

**Raina renders it as follows:**

I heard you singing on the heights
Like one playing on the harp in ecstasy,
And fairies clapped their hands in joy.

Here Mahjoor gives utterance to his observation of the situation wherein we find the peasant girl coming over the heights, singing and playing on the musical instruments. Notwithstanding Kaul's usual prosaic break-up of lines, he in the above verse has successfully communicated the dramatic situation in point. Raina, on the other hand, has not retained the original dramatic situation and has rather given it a report-like form: 'I heard you singing on the heights'. Nevertheless, he seems to have improved upon Mahjoor's expression, *changae saaz vaayaan chakai dadariye* [implying oddly that the bird itself is playing on the musical instrument] by using the assimilating word 'like'. This improved version changes the image of the bird itself playing on the musical instrument into an image assimilating the singing bird to a musician playing on musical instruments.

**The seventh verse of the original is:**

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ژٕے تہٕ خوجہٕ بایَن چھا بَرابَرٕی یے
ژٕے گُلَن سٕتی دِلبَرٕی یے
خوجہٕ بابِہٕ تٔرٕو پٔرتھ دارِ تہٕ بُرٕی یے
گرٕپسی کوٚری نازنِین سوندٕرٕی یے

**Kaul renders it as under:**

City dames can't equal you.
While they shut themselves up
In their apartments, you alone
Are friendly with the flowers.

**Raina translates it as follows:**

What gulfs between you and high-born dames!
You are the soul of freedom and flowers,
And the dames languish in shuttered prisons.

The above and the previous verse include certain terms which are altogether culture-specific like *khoji baaye* and *wanvun. Wanvun* is a distinct form of group-singing performed by Kashmiri female-folk on certain special happy social occasions such as a marriage ceremony (Kashir Encyclopedia 2002: 56). Likewise, *khoji baaye* restrictively refers to a lady belonging to an aristocratic family espousing feudal values regarding a person's high degree in social status (Grierson 1915: 395). Since the two culture-specific concepts have no lexical and cultural equivalents in English, the two translators seem to have been obliged to use simply 'singing' for *wanvun* which doesn't touch upon the specific manner of singing in unison known as *wan-*

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*vun*. Similarly, they have rendered *khoji baaye* simply as 'city dames' (Kaul) and 'high-born dames' (Raina) which also fails to fully communicate the particular life-style and values of the Kashmiri aristocratic women hinted at above.

**Another stanza of the poem is:**

گہنہٕ گنہِ پوش چھی تنہِ جُڑی جُڑی یے
گڑی متی کُمی زرگُڑی یے
پأری لگُزِ اتھ کأری گُڑی یے
گڑپسی کوٗری نازنین سوندٕری یے

**Raina translates it as:**

You wear no jewels, but your lovely skin
Sparkles with millions of them!
Glory to the jeweler who wrought this miracle!

**Kaul puts it thus:**

Your body is bedecked with
Fine, flowery ornaments
Which goldsmith made these?
What a lovely handiwork!

The original verse suggests an image of the peasant girl having decorated her body with flowers instead of any metal ornaments. As is evident, Kaul's rendering of the verse as 'Your body is bedecked with/Fine, flowery ornaments' is faithful to the original image whereas Raina's rendering of the original *gahne kani poosh chee tani jari jariyay* as 'but your lovely skin sparkles with millions of them!' can hardly be justified.

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**Another verse of the poem is the following:**

دجہِ پیٹھ وُچھمکھ تھوٗد لُدِتھ نٔرٕی یے
لولو کران لولٔرٕی یے
نَرِ ما لوسَے ژوٗر کٔرٕی کٔرٕی یے
گرٕپسی کوٗری نازنین سوندٔرٕی یے

**Raina puts it as:**

I saw you working in the field,
Singing a love song, your sleeves rolled up,-
O what rough work for those delicate arms!

**Kaul renders it as:**

With sleeves upturned, you
Are seen tending the field
With an implement. I hope
Your hands haven't got tired.

In the original we the find the spectacular image of the hard working peasant girl with her sleeves upturned, busy upturning and de-weeding her field. However, both the translators have failed to capture the original image related to the act of *tsur karen* (upturning and de-weeding the field) instead, they have used words like 'implement' (Kaul) and 'rough work' (Raina) none of which carries over adequately the image of the hard working girl.

Finally it may be said that both the English renderings of the poem stand as appreciable pieces of writing in themselves, and the theme of this poem reminds us of William Wordsworth's (1770-1850) poem 'The Solitary Reaper' with a countryside girl singing and working in a field:

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Behold her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
...
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending;—
I listened, motionless and still.

## 2. *Vuzmal*
## (*Lightning*)

### Thematic Concern

The poem is one of the best artistic creations of Mahjoor's. It may be described as an apostrophe wherein the poet personifies the lightning, a natural phenomenon, as a delicate and lovely lady. The poem at one and the same time describes various aspects of the natural phenomenon and the charming blandishments of the lovely person. Mahjoor attempts an artful balance which simultaneously brings to view the two different layers of his subject.

### Structure of the Poem

The original is couched in *vatsun* form, a well known genre of Kashmiri poetry, and consists of eleven stanzas of three lines each followed by a refrain. Both the translators have retained the stanza form but have left out the refrain of the original. The refrain *nuri vuzmaliye pure haav paan* repeatedly foregrounds the subject (the lightning) of the poem and also adds a pleasant melody to it. By dropping out the refrain, both the translations, when compared with the original, look poorer in music and the repeated foregrounding of the theme of the poem.

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**Comparative Analysis**

The original poem is entitled *vuzmal* which both the translators have accurately translated as 'Lightning'. In this poem, the first line of the stanza rhymes with the third line and the second line of the stanza rhymes with the fourth evolving an *ab ab* rhyme-scheme. The rhyming words like *naazaliye, khanbaliye, wali waliye, durphaliye* and *jaan, paan, shaan, nishaan* create a sweet word-music which the translators have understandably not been able to re-create.

**The first stanza of the original is:**

نازتنہِ یم ووزِلی جامہِ کمی وٗلی یے
نوٚرِ وُزملی یے پوٚر ہاوٗ پان
نوٚرِ وُزملی یے پوٚر نازلی یے
نوٚرِ وُزملی یے پوٚر ہاوٗ پان

**Kaul translates it as:**

Who wrapped your delicate body
In these red garments?
O charming, bright lightning!
Unfold yourself in fulness.

**Raina has rendered it as:**

Who clad your delicate frame in red,
O bright lightning, let me gaze
At you, bewitching in your splendour!

The above stanza presents the image of the lightening as

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a delicate lady wearing attractive red garments. Kaul's rendering of the first original line as 'Who wrapped your delicate body / In these red garments?' is more faithful to the original than Raina's 'Who clad your delicate frame in red...' in the sense that Kaul, like the original poet himself, points to the garments in sight as '...these red garments?' (*yem wozel jaame*). Also, Raina's rendering doesn't indicate any attention to the garments worn by the damsel. Nonetheless, Raina's 'frame' compared with Kaul's 'body' sounds more congruous with the delicate imagined damsel. What is more, Kaul's 'O charming, bright lightning! /Unfold yourself in fulness' is more striking in mood when compared with Raina's 'O bright lightning, let me gaze/ At you, bewitching in your splendour!',

**The third stanza of the lyric is:**

زُلفکِ پأٹھ چھی پیچ، ٹلہ ٹلہ یے
کارِ پتٚر شوٗباں مارِ پیچان
سونہٕ ہأرٕ مَستَس وانکہٕ وٚلٕ وٚلٕ یے
نوٚرِ وُزمٕلٕ یے پوٗرہاو پان

**Kaul has translated it as:**

You are zig-zag like the tresses
Or like graceful coiled serpents.
The plaits around your hair
Resemble golden sparrows.

**Raina has put it as:**

Your zigzag form, like wavy hair
With plaits twirled all over the golden curls,
Or like wild flowers on sinuous stems!

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If translated literally the original would mean the following: 'Your sinuous frame has curves like curly tresses, which resemble serpents coiled around your neck, and your golden hair is twirled into slender plaits'. The expression 'zigzag' (used by both the translators) describing the wavy gait of the damsel is far from being suitable. Similarly, the way Kaul speaks of the resemblance between the damsel's hair and the golden sparrows does not seem quite appropriate. Nevertheless, it will be only proper to acknowledge the fact that both the translators have tried to come as much closer to the original as was possible and have variantly succeeded in re-creating the basic original image.

**The fourth stanza of the lyric is:**

شامہٕ ژھایہٕ اوٚبرٕدار جامہٕ وٚلی وٚلی یے
وأریوٗ یتھ چھکھ پھیرتھ گژھان
بٕیٖہٕ چھکھ مالٕیٖن گژھان ژٚلی ژٚلی یے
نوٚر وُزمٕلی یے پوٚرٕہاو پان

**Kaul renders it as under:**

In the evening twilight, donning
Cloudy attire, you come to the
In-laws' house but in hot haste
Return to your parental home.

**Raina renders it as:**

Going to your husband's home in the evening
With bridal dress of sparkling starch,
You turned back soon to rush to your father's!

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The image found in this stanza, like many others is culture-specific. The image presents a typical Kashmiri married woman extraordinarily attached to her parental home, somuchso that she does not feel fully at home at her in-laws. She time and again eagerly looks for opportunities to be with her parents. It isn't easy for anybody to communicate the emotional working of the image to, say, an Englishman. Thus, if we find the two translators not having fully succeeded in communicating the emotional import of the image, it should not raise any eyebrows. Nonetheless, Kaul's rendering of the stanza can be described as a better one than that of Raina's, especially in view of the fact that Raina's expression 'husband's home' does not include all the connotations which Kaul's 'in-laws' does. As is evident, the word 'husband' indicates only a single person whereas 'in-laws' stands for the whole family of the husband. So is the case with Raina's another expression 'to your father's' compared with Kaul's more relevant expression 'parental home'. Again, in the last line of his stanza Raina has used the expression 'You turned back' and has thereby changed the tense of the original in such an inept way that the action loses its recurring feature. Similarly, Kaul's description of the evening twilight as 'donning cloudy attire' is closer to the original than Raina's 'With bridal dress of sparkling starch'. It will not be out of place to appreciate here the sense of appropriateness of both the translators in avoiding the redundancy of the two expressions found in the original, that is, *chakh gasaan* and *bayey chakh gasaan* (meaning 'you go' and 'you go again').

**Another original stanza is:**

اَنہِ گٹھِ یم مُسافِر وَتہِ ڈُلی یے
مَنٛز مَنٛز چھکھ تمَن ژ وَتھ ہاوان

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چانہِ مشالہِ ہُند گاش چُھنہِ مٔلکٕ یے
نٔوٚرِ وزمٔلکٕ یے پٔوٚرِ ہاو پان

**Kaul has put it as under:**

At intervals you lead the path of
Such wayfarers as are misled
In darkness. Indeed, the light of
Your lofty torch is above price.

**Raina renders it as follows:**

Your precious torch flames its light,
Now and again, to show the path
To those who have lost their way.

The original line starts with a moving image presenting some restless wayfarers having lost their way in darkness. Instead of starting the verse as vividly as Mahjoor has done, both Kaul and Raina have given it an unattractive start by shifting focus from the wayfarers looking for the right path to the torch as showing them the path. A preferable rendering of the stanza would be: 'The wayfarers who lose their way in the darkness/ You now and again show them the right path/Indeed the light of your torch doesn't need to be paid for'.

**The next original stanza reads as:**

تھزرَے پٔٹھ چی نارِ مشعٔلکٕ یے
گاش ہتھ کُس چھَھن ژٕپری ژھاراں
ژھیٚپہِ ژھارِ ما چھَکھ گِندان ہاژٕلکٕ یے
نٔوٚرِ وزمٔلکٕ یے پٔوٚرِ ہاو پان

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**Kaul puts the above as:**

O fiery torch of the high heavens!
Who are you looking for in this
Late hour? Or, maybe, you are
Playing the game of hide-and-seek.

**Raina translates it as under:**

O blazing torch of the high skies!
Whom does your light seek so late at night,
Or you just love playing hide-and-seek?

The original stanza comprises two different images. The first personifying the lightning as a person trying to find out somebody in the darkness with a blazing torch in hand, and the second one presenting the lightning as somebody playing hide and seek. Keeping in view the two images, it will be right to appreciate the translators' successful effort in transcreating the spectacle found in the origin. It may, however, be added here that whereas Kaul's 'high heavens' sounds more sonorous than Raina's 'high skies', his addition of the word 'game' while speaking of hide and seek is obviously redundant.

To evaluate the two translations of the poem, taken as two separate wholes, it will be fair to say that, barring a couple of stanzas which are inseparably tied to the local culture, they can engage the aesthetic sense of a reader whether knowing Kashmiri or not. It may be added here that both the translators have succeeded in capturing the kaleidoscopic image of the lightning personified as the lady peeping through the whole poem, and thus simultaneously touching upon both the layers of the theme. It may also be added here that by personifying the natural phenomenon (lightning) as a charming lady, the poet has artfully created an intimacy between the reader observing the phenomenon which otherwise would have been observed as nothing more than an indifferent and inanimate object of nature.

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# 3. *Nund Bani Dilbar Miyani (The Melting Avalanche)*

**Thematic concern**

Like most of Mahjoor's love-lyrics, the dominant theme of this lyric is the emotional plight of a female lover in separation from her indifferent beloved. Through various images and situations, it expresses the pangs of separation experienced by her and her deep yearning for union with her beloved. The theme is put forth in a direct and simple but imaginatively engaging manner.

**Structure of the Poem**

The original lyric is composed in the *ghazal* form with the difference that the whole lyric revolves around a single theme. This is in contrast to the classical Persian and Urdu *ghazal* wherein every verse deals with a particular idea, feeling or situation and each is complete in itself and independent of the rest of the verses. *The Melting Avalanche* consists of fourteen separate couplets, but both the translators have given it a stanza-wise form, and each stanza consisting of four lines.

It may be pointed out here that Kaul has divided the whole bulk of his renderings of Mahjoor into two categories, *ghazal* and *nazm*, and has put the present lyric rightly under his *ghazal* category. As for Raina, no such division is found.

**Comparative Analysis**

Although Mahjoor has not given any title to the lyric, yet we

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find Kaul entitling the song as 'The Melting Avalanche'. This symbol seems to have been derived by the translator from an image found in the third verse of the original, which reads thus:

دأنی دأنی زَن شِنہِ مأنی گُجس چانہِ اَمارَے
تھہِ پان لویُم لولہِ چے گنگابہِ وَنَے کیاہ

**The verse containing the image (underlined below) is translated by Kaul as:**

> Like the avalanche I melted
> Bit by bit with the glow of love.
> And then in desperation, I took
> The plunge into the lovely Ganga.

On the other hand, Raina, while not giving any English title of his own, introduces his translation with a few initial words of the first original hemistich as a sort of a title as: *nund bani dilbar miyaani*

One of the problems of translating poetry from one language into another is to retain or re-create the word-music found in the original. In the present lyric, Mahjoor has created a pleasant word-music in almost all the verses by means of rhyming words, both final and internal. Final rhymes include 'gaaye,' 'raaye', 'kaaye', 'saaye' and 'paaye' in words like *gangaye, dadraye, lankaaye, humsaaye* and *thadepaaye*, and internal rhymes include 'baani' and 'yaani' in words like *nund bani* and *miyaani*, 'toori' and 'doori' in works like *kustoori* and *rudukh doori*, 'daen' and 'maen' in words like *daen daen* and *shene maen*, 'waaye' and 'raaye' in words like *baywaye* and *yaawanraaye*. As is evident, the translators have not been able to capture or create the musical sounds found in the original. No doubt, Raina

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has tried to capture Mahjoor's repeated expression *wanai kyaah* by translating it as 'How shall I tell you?', for instance, in the following stanzas:

O breeze of love! Why do you tease
The simple rose of my heart?
You've made the hawk neighbor to the bulbul
How shall I tell you?
I've come to offer you all I have
The pieces of a broken heart.
Alas! Like the masval that's all I have!
How shall I tell you?

However, he has not been consistent in this regard and has left many a stanza without the said expression.

Once again, we find here Kaul ending his lines unsuitably and thus rendering his translation un-rhythmic. For instance, in the following stanzas:

O sweetheart! What can I tell you,
Love has overwhelmed me.
I was as pretty as Himaal; like
Nagrai, you wasted my youth.

Like the wild rose, my body has
Got cut into smithereens.
Like the cuckoo bird, you hid
Yourself in the far-off woods.

I would keep watch on your paths
But foes are watching my gaze
Now I learn they will even
Censor the desire of my heart.

To substantiate the above remark regarding the abnormal endings, it may be said that endings such as 'like' in the sentence 'I was as pretty as Himaal; like / Nagrai, you wasted my youth'; 'hid' in 'Like the cuckoo bird, you hid / Yourself in the

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far-off woods' and 'even' in 'Now I learn they will even / Censor the desires of my heart', result in placing stress on words like 'Naagiray', 'yourself' and 'censor', which in view of the original, do not seem calling for any stress at all. Raina's rendering of the lyric sounds comparatively more rhythmic than that of Kaul's as becomes clear in the light of following:

How shall I tell you, O beautiful one,
A Heemaal, enmeshed in your love,
Is pining, wasting away for you
O Naagiray, how shall I tell you?

Sweet thrush, you've hidden in distant woods
While, like the wild Jessamine's,
My bloom is falling off, petal by petal
How shall I tell you?

I would gaze long at the paths you took,
But they are watching my eyes.
I hear they're going to put a watch
Soon over my beating heart.

**The first verse of the lyric is:**

نُندِ بانہِ دلبرِ میانہِ وُجتھس مایہِ وَنے کیاہ
ہیمال کُرتھس ضایہِ نأگیرایہِ وَنے کیاہ

**Kaul has rendered the verse as:**

O sweetheart! What can I tell you,
Love has overwhelmed me.
I was as pretty as Himaal; like
Nagrai, you wasted my youth.

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**Raina has translated it as under:**

How shall I tell you, O beautiful one,
A Heemaal, enmeshed in your love,
Is pining, wasting away for you-
O Naagiray, how shall I tell you?

The very first verse of Mahjoor's lyric contains two proper names, Heemal and Nagirai, which stand for two lovers in a very famous Kashmiri folk-tale referred to earlier while discussing Mahjoor's poem entitled *grees kuur*. Both the translators have retained the two proper names as they occur in the original. It is doubtful whether a reader, not familiar with the Kashmiri language and the folk-tale referred to above, would be able to appreciate the import of the verse. It is obviously in view of this difficulty that Kaul has tried to bring home to his English knowing readers the import of the original two names by means of his two foot-notes describing Nagirai as 'the mythical prince of love' and Heemal as 'Nagirai's beloved'. Raina, too, explains the two names in the glossary given at the end of his book, *The Best of Mahjoor*. As such, it will not be vain to imagine even a non-Kashmiri reader, after he takes due notice of the above mentioned foot-notes and the glossary, appreciating the sentiments of the lover suffering the pangs of love in separation of her beloved.

**The next original verse is:**

راوُن چھُ لَبُن یام زونُم رام سَپنُم دِل
اَدِ نار گوٚنڈنَم خوٚفچے لَنکایہِ وَنے کیاہ

**Kaul puts it as:**

Realizing that loss in fact is gain
I consoled my heart like Rama,
Lo! Peace returned to my mind
And my fears burnt up like Lanka.

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**Raina puts it as follows:**

'Lose, if you would find!' Realizing this,
My heart became Rama, subduing Ravana,
And the Lanka of all my fears
Was burnt down to ashes.

The main idea underlying the original is that peace of mind and composure of heart is attainable only by renouncing irrelevant attachments. This idea is reproduced adequately in Kaul's rendering, but, Raina has unnecessarily and fruitlessly tried to give the idea a revelatory form by putting it like a quotation as 'Lose if you would find', which takes it away from the essential import of the simple and unambiguous expression *raavun chu labun* which has rightly been translated by Kaul as 'Realizing that loss is in fact gain'.

**The next original verse is:**

گمہِ میانہِ پتر ہنہِ گن ژنے بُری میأنٛ مُٹھے ماے
پٔرٕہتھ ساتہِ پُوکُھ لوٗکہِ ہنزے رایہِ وَنے کیاہ

**Kaul has rendered the verse as:**

Which of my rivals carried tales
To make you forget my love?
But alas! You have always
Followed the advice of others.

**Raina in his turn has put it as:**

Which jealous dame has won your ear
To make me lose your love?
You were always guided by others' views-
How shall I tell you?

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A number of words used in the lyric have certain social and cultural connotations. In the above verse, one such word is *petreni* meaning 'a jealous' and 'ill-wishing' woman. In view of the peculiar social and cultural connotations associated with the word both Kaul and Raina couldn't help but render it either as 'rival' (as done by Kaul) or as 'jealous dame' (as done by Raina) However, Raina's 'jealous dame' as compared with Kaul's 'rival' seems to come a little closer to the original expression as the word 'dame' at least specifies the female sex of the jealous person.

**The following verse presents a dramatic situation:**

ژَلہِ لارِ وُچھمکھ حال وَنہِ ہَے وارِ وُچھہَے روے
گَلہِ زیو مے گُیم اوٗش وٗتھُم دَدرایہِ وَنَے کیاہ

**Kaul has rendered it as:**

You were in a hurry and I
Could not even properly see
Your face. I became tongue-tied,
Tears flooded down my cheeks.

**Raina has translated it as follows:**

Since you were in breathless haste, I couldn't
See your face or pour out my heart,
But stood speechless, with floods of tears
Streaming from my eyes.

Both Kaul and Raina have succeeded in transcreating the dramatic situation wherein the lover catches a glimpse of her beloved in haste and is thus utterly unable to make him realize her plight in his separation. It cannot, however, be denied that

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in spite of the undesirable break-up of the sentences in Kaul's rendering, his version on the whole is more vibrant than that of Raina's, especially in view of his beginning his version with a prosaic and ineffective word like 'since'.

**The third verse of the original lyric is:**

دأنی دأنی زَن شِنہِ مأنی گُجس چانہِ اَمارَے
تھہِ پان لویُم لولہِ چے گنگاہِ وَنے کیاہ

**Kaul puts the above verse as under:**

Like the avalanche I melted
Bit by bit with the glow of love.
And then in desperation, I took
The plunge into the lovely Ganga.

**Raina has translated it as:**

I waited like a patient glacier,
Melting with yearning for you;
At last, grown desperate, I hurled myself
Into the Ganga of love.

As is evident, Kaul's rendering of *daeni daeni zan sheene maen gajish*, succeeds in rendering the image by putting it as: 'bit by bit melting of the avalanche with the glow of love', whereas Raina inadequately renders the word *sheene maen* (which exactly means an avalanche) as 'patient glacier', and adds: 'I hurled myself into the Ganga of love'. As is well known, glaciers do not plunge as avalanches do. In the same verse, we find the Kashmiri expression *loleich Ganga* translated by Kaul inadequately as 'the lovely Ganga'. The inadequacy lies in the fact that Kaul's rendering does not describe the river Ganga as the

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river of love, but merely as a lovely natural water body. Comparatively, Raina's rendering of the original expression as 'the Ganga of love' seems to be closer to the original, lexically as well as communicatively.

At the end, it may be pointed out that Kaul in his translation has omitted one of the most powerful and imaginatively engaging verses of the lyric and has thus deprived his readers of the possible aesthetic pleasure that could be derived from its rendering. The verse in the original Kashmiri is as follows:

لَو زَن بہ وُسی وُسی تام پیٚٹِس یام ژٕ دوٗریوکھ
پوٚت ژھایہِ وُچھمکھ، دوٗر آیَم گژایہ وَنے کیاہ

Raina's version is a good attempt at re-creating the image found in the original. The image presents the lover's pining away and melting down as dew in separation of her beloved. The image is made vivid in the following words:

> I've been fading away like the morning dew.
> From the day you drifted away,
> When I had a long lingering look at you
> And reeled--O, how shall I tell you?

It may be added here that Kashmiri poets like Mahjoor did not employ any kind of punctuation marks in their writings, but the translators have made a good use of the punctuation and have thereby succeeded in capturing the mood and the tone of the original. They have succeeded in putting across the dominant theme of the lyric in a manner appreciable by any lover of poetry whether Kashmiri or not.

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# 4. *Yemberzal* (*Narcissus*)

## Thematic Concern

*Yemberzal* is another significant Kashmiri poem by Mahjoor. Thematically the poem is about man's predicament in the universe around him—unintelligible and inexplicable as the poet seems to have imagined. It is an allegory wherein we find a well-known spring flower Narcissus (female gender in Kashmiri) expressing her bewilderment and anguish about her strange state of existence in the garden.

## Structure of the Poem

The original poem cast in the *ghazal* form, consists of nine verses, each comprising two hemistiches. Traditionally, the *ghazal* form consists of various verses, each presenting a separate idea or feeling independent of other verses found in the *ghazal*. But *yemberzal*, differs from the traditional *ghazal* in that in it is found a continuous and coordinated theme stretching from the opening verse to the concluding one. However, both the translators have given the *ghazal* a stanza-wise form, each stanza consisting of four lines. As is usual with Kaul, we find him in the present case too breaking up his evidently prose rendering in a seemingly verse-order.

## Comparative Analysis

Raina has rarely given a title to any of his translations under study, but in the present case not taking into consideration whether the Kashmiri title would be desirable or not for any

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non-Kashmiri reader, he has followed Mahjoor and retained the Kashmiri title, *yemberzal*. Kaul, on the other hand, has desirably translated it as 'Narcissus'.

One of the distinctive qualities of the poem is the euphony created throughout the poem by rhymes like 'mas' in words *shabnamas* and *madhamas*, 'las' in words *sumbulas* and *manzilas*, 'raan' in words *praaraan* and *tshaaraan* etc., In addition to this, there are internal rhymes like 'da and 'wa' in words like *daavas* and *wavas*, 'bur' and 'vur' in words like *bumbur* and *raavur* etc. Besides this, one also finds the repetition of (س) sound throughout the poem. The fact that the translators have not been able to re-create in their versions the musical qualities of the original, underlines the point that the art of translation does face difficulties of the kind.

It may be pointed out here that, though *yemberzal* stands as a metaphor for a human being, the majority of verses of the poem give the impression that they verbalize the Narcissus's bewilderment in the form of a soliloquy. The opening verse of the original is:

یِمبرزَل لأ جنَس داوَس گیَس حأراں ٮٕہ گس وَنہٕ کیاہ
دَپاں چھس صُبحکِس واوس بہارس شَبنَمس وَنہٕ کیاہ

**Kaul translates it as:**

He has made a gamble with me,
A narcissus! Feeling dazed, words
Fail me. I can't tell my woes to
The morning breeze, spring or dew.

**Raina puts it as:**

He placed me in a predicament!

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Bewildered, what can a yemberzal
Say to others, like the spring,
The morning breeze and the dew?

Both the translators seem to have left their versions of the verse bereft of the dramatic effect found in the original soliloquy. The loss of dramatic effect in case of Raina is caused when he speaks of the Narcissus in such words as 'What can yemberzal say to others, like the spring, the morning breeze and the dew?, suggesting as if it was not a soliloquy by *yemberzal* itself but a statement about *yemberzal* made by somebody else. Likewise, Kaul's version looks feeble in its effect, especially when he presents the Narcissus as saying 'A narcissus! Feeling dazed, words fail me: I can't tell my woes to the morning breeze, spring or dew'. The way Narcissus has been mentioned in Kaul's opening sentence is misleading in the sense that the sentence seems to suggest that the gamble could have been made with anyone including the Narcissus. Similarly, neither Kaul's 'He has made a gamble with me' nor Raina's 'He placed me in a predicament!' is a faithful rendering of *yemberzal laeginus daavus* because Mahjoor has not explicitly named the agent playing the gamble or placing in predicament and thereby has maintained an ambiguity about the point. But both Kaul and Raina, by using the word 'He', have not retained this ambiguity. The purport of the verse can be put forth as: 'He / She / It staked me in the gamble, I am at a loss to decide whom to tell what! / What should I say to the morning breeze, the dew, the spring!'

**The fifth verse is:**

سَپُن بیدار گُلشن پٔتۍ مہ پیٚارے واو گوو نٕپرتھ
تٕھس سٔنۍ ژوٚر ہٕندِس اَتھ چَمن وُزِ ناوٚنس وَنہٕ کیاہ

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**Kaul translates it as:**

Breeze stole through the garden in the
Early hours and awakened the flowers.
How intriguing that those fast asleep
Were disturbed by a deft burglar.

**Raina translates it as:**

When the garden woke up early dawn,
The breeze has gone away,
How shall I explain why he chose
A burglar's style to wake up the buds?

The first original hemistich presents a situation wherein we find a garden, which, while waking up in the early hours, realizes that the breeze, having passed through it earlier, has subsequently run away. The second hemistich is an expression of bewilderment by the Narcissus saying that what could be spoken about such a burglar making a theft of the garden's fragrance and at the same time awakening the victim of the theft. Kaul's translation of the above verse retains its sensational scenic image relating to the breeze's stealthily passing through the garden. Nonetheless, he doesn't seem to be correct when he says that the breeze awakened the garden instead of the fact that the garden wakes up itself. In contrast Raina's translation, though rendering the original sense accurately, does not succeeded in retaining the sensational scenic image hinted at above.

**The sixth verse of the original is:**

مے کُنہِ اُچھ گاش اوس بۄمبُر، سُہ کۍ شٛھرَن مے نِشہ راوُر
ٮٔہ تَس پزاراں سُہ کیاہ ژھاراں، غَمَس مَنز مَدہَمَس وَنہٕ کیاہ

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**Kaul has rendered it as:**

Beetle was my only darling. An enemy
Conspired to separate him from me.
What is he after while I wait for him?
Even the *sitar* can't express my grief.

**Raina has translated it as:**

Who estranged me from my darling bee,
The light of my eye, for whom I pine?
What he seeks now, how can I gather
From this medley of gay and wistful notes.

The verse, if translated literally, would mean: 'Which enemy of mine has kept away from me the beetle, my darling, the light of my eye? / What is he after while I lie here in wait for him! / Oh! What a strange experience--listening to a joyful music while being deep in grief!'. The ambiguity found in the sixth verse concerning the particular identity of the enemy is far more engaging than the certitude of Kaul's straight rendering: 'An enemy conspired to separate him from me'. This rendering clearly indicates that the speaker knows the enemy who has estranged the beloved from her. Comparatively, Raina looks more faithful to the original when he puts it interrogatively as: 'Who estranged me from my darling bee...?' (*kaem shethuran*?). Nonetheless, his translation of the word *bumber* (actually meaning 'the beetle') as 'bee' is not accurate. Moreover, Raina's rendering of the original expression: *be tas praraan su kyaah tsharaan* is not as true to the original as is Kaul's 'What is he after while I wait for him?' As regards the expression *gamas manz madhamus van kyaah,* both the translators seem to have missed the ironic situation which the Narcissus finds herself in while imaginatively listening to the sweet music of the beetle's buzzing and, at the same time, suffering deep excruciating grief of separation. While not having marked the irony underlying the

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original, both the translators have rendered the original line *gamas manz madhamus van kyaah,* unsatisfactorily. Raina's rendering of it as: 'This medley of gay and wistful notes' does not sound satisfactory and Kaul's rendering of it as: 'even the sitar can't express any grief' is altogether beside the point.

**Another original verse is:**

چھ صُبحس بتھ چھلتھ پُوشن ژلاں شَبنَم چمَن تراوِتھ
تِتھس دَردَس تہٕ لولَس کُن وُچھتھ اَتھ راوِنَس وَنہٕ کیاہ

**Kaul has translated it as:**

Morning dew washes the flower's face
And then takes leave of the garden.
I am puzzled when I see such
Love, agony, loss and estrangement.

**Raina has translated it as under:**

After giving each flower a morning wash,
The dew just packs away!
Having watched his acts of selfless love,
How do I account for his fading away?

The verse contains an attractive image and a dramatic situation presenting the morning dew as giving the flowers in the garden an affectionate morning wash and then suddenly disappearing in haste, leaving the garden behind unattended. Kaul's rendering of the image is a fine and fully communicative recreation. On the other hand, Raina has not succeeded in recreating the dramatic effect of the original, especially because he has begun his rendering with the following two adverbial clauses: 'After giving each flower a morning wash' and 'Having watched his acts of selfless love'.

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**The last but one verse of the Kashmiri poem is:**

بہ چھس ہے بۄ نگہ گاٚمٕژ، مَندِ چھاٚمٕژ، انٛد کُن پیٚمٕژ
أچھو پَنٛنۄ وُچھم کیاہ کیاہ گُرٕھتھ تتھ مٕنزِلَس وَنہٕ کیاہ

**Kaul puts it as:**

I am flabbergasted and feel so
Woebegone, forlorn, neglected
How can I relate to God the strange
Phenomena I saw with my own eyes?

**Raina renders it as follows:**

I lie in a corner, stunned, abashed.
How on earth can I describe
What these eyes of mine have seen
On my way to that distant goal?

Here, again, we find both Kaul and Raina conveying the sense and the tone of the first original hemistich *be chas hai bung gaemits mand chemich ande kun paymich* rhythmically: 'I am flabbergasted and feel so / Woebegone, forlorn, neglected…' (Kaul) and 'I lie in a corner, stunned, abashed' (Raina). As regards the second hemistich *gathsith tath manzilas wane kyaah,* Kaul has incorrectly translated the expression as 'How can I relate to God'. Obviously, to bring in God here is irrelevant because there is no such expression in the original as would invoke any supernatural agent. Raina, on the other hand, has interpreted the expression *that manzilas* (that place) as 'On my way to that distant goal'. This rendering compared with Kaul's does come a little nearer to the original ambiguity. Nevertheless, the ambiguity could be retained fully by rendering it as: 'I wonder how to report what I have observed here with my own eyes / After I return to the place I have come from'.

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To conclude the present analytical appraisal of the two translators, it may be affirmed that both seem to have succeeded on the whole in their attempt to introduce Mahjoor as a creative poet to the non-Kashmiri readers. It will not be wrong to imagine knowledgeable English readers appreciating thematically the two versions of the poem as they stand in themselves, especially in view of the fact that the basic theme of the poem is related to the angst of existence, a subject dealt variantly by many an English poet.

## 5. Sangarmaalan Pyov Pragaash (*Dawn*)

**Thematic Concern**

The apparent thematic concern of the poem is the condition of a garden which is presently engulfed in darkness and is withered down by the cruelty of autumn. However, the underlying theme, as hinted by the poet himself in his concluding stanza, is his optimistic vision concerning the future redemption of Kashmir from its political subjugation:

مانہِ ژار مہجورؔ سِنزَن مِثالَن
نٔرِتھ وَنہے سر گرِژھہ فاش
دانا بوزَن ناداں ٹالَن
سنگر مالَن پیوو پژاگاش

**Raina's version of it is:**

Look for the meaning in Mahjoor's symbols.

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Explaining them with profane truth!
The wise will listen, the fools evade.

## Structure of the Poem

The original poem is couched in the well-known *vatsun* form comprising seven stanzas, each made up of three hemistiches followed by a refrain. Kaul has given it a stanza-wise structure consisting of four lines whereas Raina has given his rendering a stanza form consisting of three lines. As regards the refrain *sangarmaalan pyov pragaash*, it may be pointed out that though Kaul has translated it in his first stanza, he has not retained it in the rest of his rendering. Raina, on the hand, has left out the refrain altogether. In view of the fact that the poem presents the poet's optimistic vision concerning the future of Kashmir, the refrain in the original reiterates the optimistic tone of the poem. Both the translators, by omitting the refrain have deprived their versions of the reiteration hinted at above.

## Comparative Analysis

The poem in its original form bears no title. Raina generally opens his translations with the first line of the original, but in this poem he uses the fourth original line *sangarmaalan pyov pragaash* as a title, which also happens to be the refrain of the poem. Kaul, on the other hand, introduces the poem under the English title 'Dawn'.

In this poem, the first line of each stanza rhymes with its third line and the second line rhymes with the fourth evolving an *ab ab* rhyme-scheme. Further, alliteration is found in the first line of the first stanza by the repetition of 'g' (underlined below) found in words like *gate*, *gaash* and *gaah* as in:

گٕیٖہٕ ژٚج، گاش آو، گاہ تٕرٕو لالَن

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Another instance of alliteration is found in the repetition of 'm' (underlined below) in *mani*, *Mahjoor* and *misaalan* found in the first line of the concluding stanza:

مانہِ ژار مہجورِ سٕنزٕن مِثالَن

It will be only redundant to repeat here that the word-music created by the rhymes and alliterations found in the original can hardly be re-created in any translation.

Here, too, we find Kaul unnecessarily breaking his prose-like sentences into seemingly poetic lines:

Trees which spread their branches
Beyond limits are pruned
By the gardener. You too
Don't let your ideas go awry.

After boughs weather the storm of
Autumn, spring will come and
Hold an inquiry. Those that have
Borne the brunt will blossom again.

Compared with it, Raina's following renderings sound more rhythmic:

The gardener always prunes those trees
Which start growing out of size.
Thus watch your thoughts at every step!

Flower bushes bear autumn's havoc, knowing
That spring will surely come and probe!
He alone survives who faces ordeals.

**The first stanza of the original is:**

گٕٹہٕ ژٕج، گاش آو، گاہ ترٕوو لالَن
سَنگر مالَن پیوو پزٕاگاش

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سنگر مالن کوہن تہٕ بالن

سنگر مالن پیوو پڑاگاش

**Kaul renders it as:**

Darkness ends, dawn is at hand,
The sun is casting its glow on
The horizon. Hills and mountain
Ranges are shining in the light.

**Raina puts it as:**

Black night has ended, and day has dawned!
See light has kissed all mountain peaks,
And the tulip is all aglow.

Although both the translators have described the advent of dawn casting light on all mountain tops, yet it needs be said that Raina's 'See light has kissed all mountain peaks, / And the tulip is all aglow' is imaginatively more spectacular than Kaul's 'The sun is casting its glow on / The horizon. Hills and mountains'. However, Kaul has left here untranslated a significant expression of the original, namely, *gaah trov laalan*, which Raina has aptly translated as 'and the tulip is all aglow'. It needs be acknowledged that Kaul in his rendering of the first stanza has faithfully rendered the import of the plurisignificant Kashmiri word *gata* as 'darkness', which at one and the same time means darkness related to nightfall and the darkness referring to a bad spiritual, political or social condition. Raina's version of the stanza, on the other hand, renders the rich word *gata* into a rigid expression 'black night' which deprives the original word of its meaningful ambiguity.

**The second verse of the poem is:**

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باغکی ریزَل وارِلین گالَن
بُلبُلیہِ تراو غَم کَڈ پَکھن واش
تیٚتہِ یور چونُے مَذہَب پالَن
سَنگر مالَن پیوو پَراگاش

**Kaul's rendering reads as:**

Hawks that threaten the birds
Shall be catapulted, O 'bulbul'!
Shed all fears, open your wings.
Henceforth, your law shall prevail.

**Raina has translated it as:**

Hawks can't escape from the garden's slingers!
O bulbul, shed fear and plume your wings.
From now on, your faith will rule.

The first hemistich of the second stanza literally means that 'the slingers of the garden will finish the hawks'. Kaul's translation of it as 'Hawks that threaten the birds / Shall be catapulted...' does, no doubt, convey the main idea of the hemistich but it fails to tell as to who will catapult the hawks that threaten the birds, though the original unambiguously tells that the slingers of the garden will put an end to the threatening hawks. Comparatively, Raina's version of the line as 'Hawks can't escape from the gardener's slingers!' is a little closer to the original in the sense that it points out the agents who will catapult the hawks. Likewise, in the third hemistich Kaul translates the original Kashmiri word *mazhab* inaccurately as 'law', whereas Raina renders it correctly as 'faith'.

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**The third verse is:**

ہَرٕدُک طوٗفان پوشہِ تھَرِ ژالَن
سونٛتھ یِیہِ دوہہَ اَکہِ تُلہِ پُرخاش
سُے پھولہِ تَن دِیہِ یُس جَنجالن
سَنگرمالَن پیوو پٔڑاگاش

**Kaul has translated it as:**

After boughs weather the storm of
Autumn, spring will come and
Hold an inquiry. Those that have
Borne the brunt will blossom again.

**Raina puts it as:**

Flower bushes bear autumn's havoc, knowing
That spring will surely come and probe!
He alone survives who faces ordeals.

In the above stanza, we find Mahjoor asserting that the flower bushes will weather the atrocity of autumn and that spring will come some day and hold an inquiry, and that he who braces ordeals will bloom. Both Kaul and Raina have to a considerable extent reproduced the idea expressed in the above lines; but when compared with each other, Raina's rendering captures the poet's asserting tone more effectively than that of Kaul's. This becomes clear when we find Kaul rendering the first two lines as 'After boughs weather the storm of / Autumn, spring will come and / Hold inquiry' which does not retain the asserting tone of the original especially by opening the line with the word 'After'. Same is the case with his translation of the original word *poshe thari* as 'boughs', which is not an accurate lexical alternative for the Kashmiri *poshe thari*. *Poshe thari* actually means 'flower bushes' (Kashir Dictionary 1972: 372) as correctly rendered by Raina.

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**The fifth stanza of the original is:**

گُلالہِ لولچہِ مَشالہِ زالَن
تَمہِ نوٗرِ روشن گرِژھ آکاش
یمبرزل شبنمٕک مَس پھرِ پیالَن
سنگر مالَن پیوو پزاگاش

**Kaul has rendered it as:**

Tulips shall kindle love torches,
Their glow will brighten the sky.
The iris shall pour the
Dewy brew into the glasses.

**Raina has rendered the verse as:**

The tulip will blaze the torch of love,
Irradiating heaven with that light.
While yemberzal pours out the wine of dew.

Barring the minor oversight while translating the original *yemberzal* (Narcissus) as 'iris', we find here Kaul, on the whole, nearer to the original, especially when we find him retaining the plural number of the tulips and the torches instead of Raina's singular 'tulip' and 'torch'. Similarly, Kaul has rightly retained the future tense in the third hemistich when he renders *yemberzal shabnamukh mas phir piyaalan* as 'The iris shall pour the dewy brew into the glasses'. Raina has undesirably changed the future tense into present continuous as 'While yemberzal pours out the wine of dew'. This change in the number and tense deflates the original of its optimistic and assertive hope about the future.

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**The sixth verse of the original reads:**

گُلِ آفتابَن موہر لَرِ تھالَن
لولِکہِ اَسمانہِ ہیتھ آو راش
اِسبَنْد زولُس اَمی گُلِ لالَن
سَنگر مالَن پیوو پَڑاگاش

**Kaul puts it as:**

The sunflower filled plates with
Gold coins: this wealth it got
From the heaven of love. The tulip
Burnt incense to celebrate this.

**Raina has put it as under:**

The sunflower has arranged her plates
With gold coins from love's firmament.
The tulip with his incense wishes him joy.

The image presented in this stanza is wholly culture-specific hinting at a ceremonial custom mostly observed on occasions related to a wedding and referring to the custom of presenting to the bride a tray filled with gold coins or ornaments from the groom's side and accompanied by burning rue to celebrate the happy occasion. Feeling, that the custom of burning rue to celebrate any happy occasion might not be desirably appreciated by anyone not knowing the Kashmiri language and the culture-bound custom, both the translators have tried to explain the culture-bound sense by adding to the original such expressions as 'to celebrate this' (Kaul) and 'wishes him joy' (Raina). However, notwithstanding these explanatory expres-

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sions, none of the two English versions thereof, has succeeded in conveying the real import of the original expression related to the custom.

At the end, it would be proper to acknowledge that, in spite of the little inaccuracies found here and there in the two versions, both translators have succeeded, to a considerable extent, in putting across the apparent as well as the underlying import of the original.

## 6. *Waloo Haa Baagwaano (Arise, O Gardener!)*

### Thematic Concern

*Arise O Gardener*! is one of the most popular poems of Mahjoor's. The subject of the poem is bound to a particular political situation related to the pre-independence situation in Kashmir during the autocratic rule of the Dogra dynasty. Commenting on the poem, Taing (1984: 80) rightly says that "this whole poem is an outcome of an intense national feeling". One of the distinctive features of this patriotic-cum-political poem is its vocative nature. Here, we find the poet directly addressing the gardener (a symbol for Kashmiri people) to rise and make necessary efforts to set things right in his garden (i.e., his motherland, Kashmir) in order to usher in a fresh bloom of life (a free and prosperous future). Scholars like Chaman Lal Chaman (1987) say that Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, who spearheaded the freedom movement of Kashmir during the first half of the previous century, realized the importance of the present poem for the movement. He therefore, made it his wont to open his public addresses with his melodious and fervent recitation of *walo haa baagvaano*, and thereby popularized it as a defacto political anthem of the Kashmiri masses for years together.

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## Structure of the Poem

The original poem comprises fourteen verses each made up of two hemistiches, of which Raina has translated only six whereas Kaul has translated twelve verses. Instead of adopting the original verse form, both have employed a stanza form. Kaul's stanza consists of four-lines each whereas Raina's is made up of only three lines. It may be added here that even after replacing the verse form with a stanza form, each stanza like the original two-line verse fully captures the idea expressed in the verse.

## Comparative Analysis

Like many of Mahjoor's lyrics and poems, the present poem also has a melody of its own, which is created by the poet's use of a surging metre and undulant rhythm. In view of its outward structure, the poem looks like a *ghazal* wherein the opening two hemistiches end with two rhyming words *shaan* and *saamaan* followed by a 'radeef' (the repeated word or words following the final rhymes) *paida kar*, and each and every second hemistich of all the verses that come after the opening couplets end with one or the other word rhyming with *shaan* and *saamaan*. However, in view of its single dominating theme, it would be more apposite to categorize it as a poem *nazm*, instead of a *ghazal* as Kaul has done.

No doubt, none of the two translators has attempted to employ in their versions any such word-music as in found in the original, and this is because translation from one language to another does not often succeed in recreating such language-bound peculiarities.

**The opening verse of the poem is:**

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وَلوہا باغوانو نَو بہارُک شان پیدا گر
پھولن گُل گتھ کرَن بُلبل تتھی سامان پیدا گر

**Kaul has rendered it thus:**

Arise O Gardener! And usher in
The glory of a new spring.
Create conditions for 'bulbuls' to
Hover over full-blown roses.

**Raina has rendered it as:**

Come, gardener! Create the glory of spring! Make
Guls bloom and bulbuls sing-create such haunts!

As mentioned above, one of the noteworthy qualities of the poem is its vocative tone. The poet here urges the gardener (implying the Kashmiri people) to realize the desolate condition of his garden and to make necessary efforts to change his desolated garden into a flourishing one so that it develops into a happy dwelling for all the concerned. Both Kaul and Raina have adequately retained the vocative urging tone of the original. However, the second hemistich of the above original stanza contains two notable expressions: *gath karan bulbul* and *tithee saamaan paida kar*, which deserve a closer attention. As regards the first expression *gath karan* Kaul's 'hover over' comes out lexically more appropriate when compared with Raina's 'sing'. Similarly, Kaul's rendering of the original expression *tithe saamaan paida kar* as 'create conditions' is the right choice as compared with Raina's 'haunts' for the simple reason that the word 'haunt' is mostly associated with ghosts, spirits, etc (Webster's Encyclopedic Dictionary 1993: 443).

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**Another verse from Mahjoor is:**

چَمن وأراں، رِواں شبنم، ژٚٹھ جامہٕ پریشان گُل
گُلن تے بُلبُلن اندر دُبارٕ جان پیدا کر

**Kaul has translated the above as:**

Dew bemoans the garden's
Desolation. Harassed roses have
Torn their garments. Infuse
New life into flowers and 'bulbuls'.

**Raina has translated it as:**

The dew weeps, and your garden lies desolate;
Tearing their robes, your flowers are distracted.
Breathe life once again into the lifeless gul and the bulbul!

The verse seems to suggest that the weeping of the dew and distraction of the roses is due to the ruined condition of the garden. Kaul's rendering implies the reason of the dew's weeping as 'Dew bemoans the garden's desolation' whereas Raina's 'The dew weeps, and your garden lies desolate' not only changes the sequence of events but also fails to indicate any reason for the dew's weeping, especially by using the conjunction 'and' in the line 'The dew weeps, and your garden lies desolate'. On the other hand, Raina's use of the word 'distracted' for the original *parayshaan* is lexically accurate than Kaul's 'harassed'.

**The next original verse is:**

مَہ تھو گُلزارس اَندر سوے، گُلَن کرٕہ سوے خرأبی چھے
یِواں سۆمبُل چھِ پے دَر پے، گُلِ خَندان پیدا کر

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**Kaul has translated it as:**

Root out stinging nettle from
The garden; it will harm flowers.
Wave after wave of hyacinths
Are coming; let them laugh.

**Raina puts it as under:**

Rank nettles hamper the growth of your roses.
Weed them out, for look thousands
Of hyacinths are crowding at the gate!

The way Kaul opens his rendering of it as 'Root out stinging nettles from the garden...' is more urgent as well as dynamic in tone than Raina's flat 'Rank nettles hamper the growth of your roses / Weed them out...'. The former's use of the adjective 'stinging' for the nettles is desirable compared with Raina's 'Rank', which implies merely a 'wild growth' of the nettle' (Webster's Encyclopedic Dictionary 1993: 828). However, Kaul's sentence 'Wave after wave of hyacinths are coming' is not only grammatically incorrect because the expression 'wave after wave' demands 'is coming' rather than 'are coming' but is also cold in expression. Again, it would be more suitable colloquially to use 'let them have a laugh' instead of 'let them laugh'.

**The next verse is as follows:**

گری کس بُلبلا آزاد پنجرس منز ژ نالاں چھکھ
ژ پنے دستہٕ پننن مُشکلن آسان پیدا گر

**Kaul has rendered the above verse as:**

Who will free you, O 'bulbul',
While you bewail in the cage?
With your own hands, work out
Your own salvation.

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**Raina has translated the verse as under:**

Who will set you free, captive bird,
Crying in your cage? Forge with your own hands
The instruments of your deliverance!

The verse presents an image of a caged bird crying in vain for its freedom, and the speaker of the poem advises the bird to itself find solution for its problems. Though both the translators have captured the image and the situation in point, yet it needs be said that Raina's 'Who will set you free, captive bird' is more stimulating than Kaul's cold question 'Who will free you, O bulbul...'. Nonetheless, Kaul's rendering of the second hemistich *tse panenay daste panenen mushkilan aasan paida kar* as 'with your own hands work out your salvation' is better in communicating the sense of the original than Raina's 'Forge with your own hands / The instruments of your deliverance!'.

**Another verse of the original is:**

اگر وُزِ ناوہَن بَستی گُلن ہنز، تراو زپروبَم
بُنیِل گر، واو گر، گگرایہِ گر، طوٗفان پیدا گر

**Kaul has translated it as:**

If you must awaken this rosy
Habitat, give up the harp.
Bring about earthquakes and
Thunder, raise a tempest.

**Raina has translated it as:**

Bid good-bye to your dulcet strains. To rouse
This habitat of flowers, create a storm,
Let thunder rumble, - let there be an earthquake!

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Kaul begins his rendering with an urgent tone as: 'If you must awaken this rosy / Habitat give up this harp', which sounds more evocative than Raina's beginning the line nervelessly as 'Bid good-bye to your dulcet strains. To rouse / This habitat of flowers...'. It is worth noting here that in Kaul's rendering, unlike that of Raina's, the objective (i.e., awakening of the rose-garden) is spoken of before any calling for the action required for obtaining that objective. Moreover, Kaul's word 'harp' for the original *zeer o bum* is inept in contrast with Raina's 'dulcet strains', which is a more expressive choice. Further, Raina has improved upon the original by his changing the sequence of the natural phenomena mentioned in the original. In the original the chain of events starts with an earthquake followed by wind, thunder and storm, but Raina puts it as: 'Create a storm, / Let thunder rumble, - let there be an earthquake!'. Raina's sequence seems more natural as it starts with an event of smaller magnitude followed by phenomena more and more powerful and commotion-creating.

The original poem is bound to a particular time, place and socio-political situation, and includes some history-bound verses that refer to certain particular personalities notable in Kashmir history. These personalities are Lalitaditya (725-763 A.D), Tazi Bhat (15th C), Syed Mubarakh Khan (16th C), Rahmaan Mir (20th C), Zia Bhan (18th C), Nand Raam (18th C) and Gani (16th C). These people in the past have achieved fame either by their illustrious governance, their valorous deeds or by dint of their creative genius, which Mahjoor acknowledges in the following verses:

1)

دُبارِ عالَمس منز کاشِرِ بن ہُند ناو گژھ روشن

ژ للتادَت تہٕ تازی بَٹ، مُبارَک خان پیدا گر

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**Translated by Kaul as:**

Kashmiris' fame will again
Spread in the world if you
Create luminaries like Tazi Bhat,
Lalitaditya and Mubarak Khan.

2)

بوٚہوٚدُر، شیر دِل گُنٛزراوٚنَے بٕیہِ کوبلی، تُرکی
ژ رحماں میر ہیوٚ کاٹھا دوٚیُم کپتان پیدا کر

If you produce a second captain like Rahmaan Mir
You will be admired as a brave person like a Turk or a Kabuli.

3)

پگن فَرمانِ شاہی اَزتہِ بٕیہِ چانبن اِشارَن پٹھ
ژ یَتھ پَنٛنس زَمانَس مَنٛز دوٚیُم زِیہِ بھان پیدا کر

**Translated by Kaul as:**

Officials writs will again run
At your will in case you
Produce a peer of Zia Bhan
In this modern age.

4)

بیَین مُلکَن اَندر اَدِ گاٹہِ جارُک سِکہِ بٕیہناوکھ
ژ یَتھ مُلکَس اندر نُنٛدرام ہیوٚ، دیوان پیدا کر

Do produce some counselor like Nand Raam,
And you will certainly leave an impact of your wisdom in
other countries around you.

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5)

گرن سر خم ژے کن اہلِ ادب ایران و شیراز کی
غنی ہیوٗ بیاکھ کانہہ جادُو بیاں اِنسان پیدا گر

**Translated by Kaul as:**

Litterateurs of Iran will bow
To you in reverence if you
Create a poet with powers of
Magical narration like Ghani.

By inviting his readers' attention to the historical personalities and their praise-worthy achievements, the poet intends to arouse his readers' curiosity for gaining a worthwhile knowledge about their illustrious ancestry and thereby to seek inspiration from them. Kaul has been wiser in including at least three of the above mentioned verses and thereby to represent the poet's intention. Raina has omitted all the five verses, perhaps because of his apprehension that mere naming of certain local Kashmiri heroes might not arouse desirable response from a non-Kashmiri reader not adequately familiar with the history of the land. However, the omission has turned his rendering poorer because the rendering fails to touch upon in any manner the poet's objective, i.e., to inspire Kashmiri people for greater deeds.

Finally, it may be said that even though the subject of the poem is bound to a particular political situation related to the past and is politically admonishing and propagandistic in aim, the two English renderings (barring the omission of history-bound verses in Raina's version) as pieces of imaginative writings do possess a few image-making, rhythmic and evocative qualities that can earn appreciation from lovers of poetry.

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# 7. *Aazaedi* (*Freedom*)

## Thematic Concern

Mahjoor is a well-known Kashmiri songster. However, that is only one aspect of his poetic portrait. The other aspect reveals his patriotic-cum-political predilections. In fact, it was his poems on patriotic and political subjects that won him the title, 'The Poet of Kashmir' ( شاعرِ کشمیر ) Indeed, the poet himself designated this type of his poems as *Payaam-i-Mahjoor* (the message of Mahjoor). While reading such poems, one is delighted to find in some of them, like the present poem, his refreshing sense of humour and sharp talent for satire.

This poem, according to Mahjoor himself, was composed at the time of India's partition. The poem is a satirical composition singing with the tongue in cheek praises of the freedom of the Indian sub-continent from foreign rule. However, the poem expresses in disguise and in an ironic manner the painful disillusionment which the poet experienced in the face of various unexpected and ugly happenings that came about as a result of partition. The partition, it may be recalled, entailed a savage massacre of innocent people followed by an all-round corruption, nepotism, foul and fraud by the people who held the reins of authority across the whole country including Kashmir, the poet's birthplace.

## Structure of the Poem

The original poem comprises 14 couplets. Out of these, Kaul has translated only 12 and Raina has translated only 9. Both

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of them have replaced the original two-line verse form with a stanza form consisting of four lines each. This structural change however, makes no considerable difference in reproducing the original import.

**Comparative Analysis**

Kaul has entitled his translation of the poem as *Freedom and Partition* whereas Raina has entitled it simply as *Freedom.*

**The poem opens with the following couplet:**

ثَنا سأرِی پُرُو سانبن گرَن مَنّز ژلیہِ آزأدی
سبٹھاہ یُژکأکی اَسہِ کُن جَلوٕ ہاواں آیہِ آزأدی

**The verse has been translated by Kaul as:**

God be thanked that freedom
Has dawned after centuries,
And our homes and hearths
Feel its sparkling impact.

**Raina has translated it as:**

Let us all offer thanksgiving,
For Freedom has come to us;
It's after ages that she has beamed
Her radiance on us.

One thing that may delight the reader while comparing these two versions is the pleasant rhythmic flow found in Raina's rendering, a quality which Kaul's version is wanting in. Further, Raina's expression 'Let us all offer thanksgiving' is nearer to the sense and the tone of the original *sanaa saeree pariv* than Kaul's 'God be thanked'. Moreover, Raina's English word

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'radiance' for the Kashmiri *jalve* which exactly means 'glimpse' (Kashir Dictionary 1974: 64) comes nearer in import to the original than Kaul's 'sparkling impact'.

**The next verse is:**

یہِ آزأدی چھےٚ ترٛاواں مَغرِبَس کُن رَحمتٕک باراں
گَراں سأنِس زمِنَس پٹھ ژھربے گگرایہِ آزأدی

**Kaul renders it as:**

Freedom rains benevolence and
Prosperity on the West,
But on our land it makes
Only a hollow thunder.

**Raina has translated thus:**

In western climes Freedom comes
With a shower of light and grace,
But dry, sterile thunder is all
She has for our own soil.

The basic idea underlying the verse is that freedom has not proved any beneficial for our country as it has proved for countries in the west, though there has been much hullabaloo concerning the advent of the so called freedom. Both the above renderings convey the original idea faithfully along with its satirical tone, yet it needs be said that the way Kaul uses the conjunction 'and' at the end of his first line and the verb 'makes' at the end of his third line does not look natural, one rather finds it somewhat irksome.

**The next verse is:**

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غرٕیبی، مُفلسی، بے یوٗج ستۍ ہتھ خانہٕ وٲرٲنی
اَمی ہٕژِ تراٲیہٕ اَسہ پٮٹھ سایہٕ تراواں آیہٕ آزٲدی

**Kaul puts it as:**

Alas! Freedom brought in its wake
Nothing but a long shadow of
Anarchy, poverty, deprivation
And sad, divided households.

**Raina translates it as follows:**

Poverty and starvation,
Repression and lawlessness,
It's with these happy blessings
That she has come to us.

As already pointed out, Mahjoor in the present poem sings praises of freedom with the tongue in his cheek. The above verse is a satirical account of the various painful hardships like poverty, anarchy and social ruin that freedom itself has brought along with it. No doubt, the idea underlying the verse has been duly carried over in both the renderings, yet Kaul's beginning his rendering with the woeful exclamation 'Alas!' deprives the original of the sarcastic tinge found in the original. Raina, on the other hand, has retained the sarcasm of the original by describing things like poverty and starvation, repression and lawlessness as 'these happy blessings'.

**Another original verse is:**

یہٕ آزٲدی چھےٚ سورگچ ہوٗر پھیٚر یا خانہٕ پَتہٕ خانے
فقط کیٚژُن گرَن اَندر چھےٚ ماراں گڑلیہٕ آزٲدی

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**Kaul puts it thus:**

Freedom is like a coquettish
Fairy from the high heavens.
Naturally, it condescends to
Stroll into houses of chosen few.

**Raina translates it as follows:**

Freedom, being of heavenly birth,
Can't move from door to door;
You'll find her camping in the homes
Of chosen few alone.

Here, again, Raina seems to have done better than Kaul. This becomes obvious when one finds Raina rendering the original word 'huur' (i.e., houri) as 'being of heavenly birth' instead of Kaul's putting it as 'a coquettish fairy from the high heavens', though he too, like Kaul, has missed the sarcastic and interrogative tone of the original expression *phairya khane pate khanay?*. What is more, Kaul's replacing the original symbol-like epithet *suwargech huur* by a poor simile ('Freedom is like a coquettish fairy') and also his use of the adverbial expression 'naturally' in his third line reduces the translation to the level of a nerveless prosaic utterance.

**The next verse is:**

یہِ آزأدی دَپاں سَرمایہِ دأری چَھنہِ کُنی تھاوٕنی
وُں پَتٕیٖن نِشہِ چھےٚ سۄ مبراوُن ہۄواں سَرمایہِ آزأدی

**Kaul has translated the above as:**

Freedom was supposed to end
Capitalism but it has, instead,
Resulted in capital formation,
Favouring only near and dear.

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**Raina has rendered it as under:**

She says she will not tolerate
Any wealth in private hands;
That's why they are wringing capital
Out of the hands of everyone.

Though both, when compared with the original, seem to be wanting in verve and warmth, yet the fact remains that Kaul's rendering sounds like a cold statement from some field of economics rather than an utterance from any poetic domain. Moreover, the last two lines of Kaul's stanza are no less than an over-translation of the original in the sense that Capitalism is a particular system of economy dominating the industrial world. Though, in fact, the original simply implies that 'freedom' is now snatching away money from the very people who expected it (i.e., freedom) to take away wealth from the rich. In contrast, Raina's rendering is not only nearer to the implied import of the original, but also succeeds in retaining its sarcastic connotation.

**Another original verse is as follows:**

لُکن ماتَم گرَن اَندر بہتھ مَہراژ ہی حاکِم
یَمو رٛٹمٛژ چھےٚ پانَس ستۍ خلوٗکھ شاہِ آزأدی

**The verse finds the following rendering at Kaul's hand:**

Rulers frolic like bridegroom
While the people are in mourning!
Freedom has blessed them with
The ivory castles of solitude.

**And Raina's rendering of it runs as follows:**

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There is mourning in every house;
But in sequestered bowers
Our rulers, like bridegrooms,
Are in dalliance with Freedom.

Here, Kaul has not remained faithful to the original, especially when he says that 'Freedom has blessed them with / The ivory castles of solitude'. Compared with it, Raina's 'in sequestered bowers / Our rulers, like bridegrooms, / Are in dalliance with Freedom' is not only a faithful rendering of the original idea but also incorporates the original pulsating image presenting bureaucrats as bridegrooms posing as happy rulers who in secluded places enjoy the company of brides.

**The next verse is:**

گُمتی دَم پُھٹ چھِ سأری، بے قرأری چھکھ دِلَن اَندر
دَپاں وَنہٕ ہو پَنُن اَوحال اَسہِ ما لایہِ آزأدی

**Kaul conveys its sense following:**

People are stunned with sorrow
And their hearts are restless;
They dare not relate their woes
Lest the cops should beat them up.

**And Raina has verbalized it thus:**

There's restlessness in every heart,
But no one dare speak out-
Afraid that with their free expression
Freedom may be annoyed.

As a result of his almost slavish fidelity to the original, Kaul doesn't succeed in duly imparting to his rendering the

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astounding and suffocating restlessness of the initial original expression: *gamathi dam phaeti chhi saeree bay qaraeree chhak dilan ander*, especially so because of his using the word 'sorrow' in his first line instead of some more communicative alternative like 'suffocation', and also because of his beginning the second line of his rendering with his enfeebling prosaic conjunction 'and'. So is his unjustifiable use of the word 'cops' in place of 'freedom'. This replacement deprives Kaul's rendering of the ironic sting felt in the original *asi maa laayi azaedi*, meaning: 'lest Freedom should beat us up!'. Compared with it, Raina's rendering of the verse is not only true to the original idea but also carries with it the latent irony and sarcasm therein.

By way of examining the communicative quality of the two translators, it may be said that both Kaul and Raina have on the whole succeeded in capturing and conveying the basic sarcastic theme of the poem along with the poet's disillusionment with the freedom in question. In view of the over-all creative quality of the two renderings, it will not be vain to hope that the translations will find lovers of creative literature, whether Kashmiri or not appreciating them.

Keeping in mind the various points discussed through the present chapter, it becomes clear that the task of translation, especially when dealing with poetry, proves to be a challenging one. In view of the fact that Mahjoor's poetry is culture-specific and related to the history of its time, its translation is found to be all the more difficult. This being the case, one finds it gratifying that both the translators have succeeded to a considerable extent in communicating the overall import of the original and in making their prospective English readers familiar with a linguistically and culturally different community, like that of Kashmiris. They have thereby done an admirable job of introducing a Kashmiri poet like Mahjoor to non-Kashmiri people.

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# Conclusion

Mahjoor being one of the most outstanding poets of the Kashmiri language, has attracted attention of not only his compatriots but also of people writing in other languages as well. As for Mahjoor's representation in English is concerned, it needs be underlined that T.N. Kaul was the first person to translate quite a considerable bulk of Mahjoor's poetry into English and then publish it in a book form. He was followed by T.N. Raina, who is found deriving ample benefit from the former.

The translators in question have chosen for their renderings poems only from *Kalaam* and *Payaam* categories, leaving the third one (*Salaam*) altogether untouched. It will not be out of place to point out here that although Raina has named his book of translation as *The Best of Mahjoor* he has yet unaccountably left out several noteworthy poems from the *Payaam*, including a very well-known and quite a remarkable poem of the poet, *Kaatse Zoon*. The poem, it may be affirmed, is an emotionally pulsating expression of the poet's tantalizing recollections of the happy historic times when his motherland enjoyed the glories of freedom as an independent and sovereign state.

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No doubt, Kaul has included in his book of translation, this poem and along with it some other poems (portions carrying political overtones) but he too has left out such verses of the original as echo similar sentiments of the poet. The omissions in point might have been due to certain ideological predilections of the two translators not finding notions like Kashmir's independence comfortable.

The present work has tried to ascertain the truth that translation, especially in case of poetry, is crucially a difficult task. The journey from the poetic domain of one language into that of another is beset with many obstacles, some of them unsurmountable.

While analyzing the two English renderings of Mahjoor's poetry chosen for the present work, a number of such original Kashmiri verses came into view which were intrinsically either culture-specific, belief-infused, religious-oriented, myth-wrapped and bound to a particular tradition, history, time or space. In many such cases both the translators, though not succeeding fully in communicating the spirit of these verses, are nonetheless found to have made an admirable attempt in drawing closer to the original.

As for the over-all quality of the two translations, it has been pointed out time and again throughout the present book that Raina's renderings come out as more rhythmic than those of Kaul's. One reason for Kaul's feeble rhythm is the odd break-up of his obviously prose-like sentences into ostensibly 'poetic' lines. However, it needs be acknowledged that both the translators have in most cases desirably preferred the communicative method of translation in place of a word-for-word rendering. The comparison made herein comes out as a further proof of the veracity of the knowledgeable people's observation that a communicative translation compared with a word-

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for-word rendering does succeed in duly transferring a source language text into a target language.

Further, an important fact calling for due consideration in the present context is that Mahjoor's poetry is not a poetry of the printed page. Instead, Mahjoor, as reported by Taing (1984), had all along been keen to make sure that his poetry was harmonious enough to be sung to the accompaniment of musical instruments, especially those used in Kashmiri folk music. Therefore, it is quite understandable that both our translators seem to have found it hard to reproduce in English, for instance, the sweetly vibrant music created in the original by the poet's use of a few quite melodious metric patterns as well as things like alliteration, assonance, repetition of words serving as initial, internal and final sonorous rhymes—all put together.

It needs be acknowledged that both the translators have to their credit a number of renderings that can serve as good sources of aesthetic pleasure and providing valuable means of introducing Mahjoor to the English-knowing lovers of literature outside Kashmir. Further, the renderings can be imagined as kindling curiosity in their readers to know more about the language that Mahjoor wrote in (i.e. Kashmiri), and about the Kashmiri people as a whole.

**********

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# Poetry Will Come Back

We need rice, salt,
chilly, firewood;
we can do without poetry.

Yet poetry will come back
like rice,
the seed of the earth,
boiled and cleaned of husk and bran,
overflowing every measure
every granary and godown;
like salt,
the memory of the sea,
watering our mouths,
burning us with pain
in order to heal our wounds,
nourishing our roots;
like chilly,
the lust of the clay,
turning hot our lips, tongues,
breasts, waists, veins and nerves;
like the firewood,
the bones of the forest,
their marrow melting sizzling
burning slow with tiny flames,
chanting, in a single breath,
rice salt chilly firewood poetry.

K. Satchidanandan
(A noted South-Indian poet)

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# Glossary

**Aarval**: local Kashmiri flower.

**Aamun**: the smell arising out of burning of cotton.

**Baime**: sister's husband.

**Bhatki Movement**: refers to the theistic devotional trend that emerged in medieval Hinduism. It originated in the seventh-century south India and spread northwards. The movement has traditionally been considered as an influential social reformation in Hinduism, and provided an individual-focused alternative path to spirituality regardless of one's caste of birth or gender.

**Bazmia Mathnavi**: is along narrative poem dealing with themes like romantic love.

**Bulbul**: Nightingale.

**Bumbur**: Beetel.

**Chhakree**: is one of the most popular types of traditional music played in Kashmir. It is a responsorial song form with instrumental parts, and it is played with instruments like harmonium, rubab, sarangi and nout.

**Chitte pompur**: printed moth.

**Desh ganden**: the custom of tying a piece of cloth or thread to the window of a shrine desiring fulfilment of a certain wish.

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**Eshqi paychaan:** Morning glory.

**Faqir**: a dervish.

**Ghazal**: is a peculiar kind of poetry consisting of various couplets each of which is thematically complete and independent of other couplets. The number of couplets used in it generally vary from five to fifteen couched in any Persian quantitative metre.

**Gulab**: Rose.

**Gul**: Rose-bud.

**Goshtabe**: round minced meat balls cooked in yoghurt.

**Hahar**: Wife's brother.

**Heemal**: is the heroine of the famous Kashmiri folk-tale *Heemal Nagiray*. A princess living in a Kashmiri village called Balapur who had fallen in love with Nagirai.

**Katij**: swallow.

**Kanzun**: the smell arising out of burning of wool.

**Khoji baaye**: restrictively refers to a lady belonging to an aristocratic family espousing feudal values regarding a person's high degree in social status.

**Ladishah**: is a satirical ballad resonating the present social and political conditions and are utterly humorous. The songs reflect the truth and that sometimes makes the song a bit hard to digest, but they are totally entertaining.

**Lila or Leela**: like many Sanskrit words, cannot be precisely translated into English, but can be loosely translated as the noun 'play'. Lila a way of describing all reality, including the cosmos as the outcome of creative play by the divine absolute (Brahman).

**Lole**: in Kashmiri has two senses: a) love and (b) sense of missing and yearning.

**Lole-Lyric**: Love-Lyric.

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**Maari paychaan**: Coiled serpent.

**Maam**: mother's brother.

**Maasuw**: mother's sister's husband.

**Maas**: mother's sister.

**Maktab**: is an Arabic word meaning elementary schools used for teaching children reading, writing, grammar and Islamic studies such as Qira'at (Quranic recitation). Until the 20th century, maktabs were the only means of mass education in much of the Islamic world.

**Mas khaes**: Wine goblets.

**Masval**: local Kashmiri flower.

**Mathnavi**: is a long narrative poem.

**Matla**: the two lines of the first couplet of a *ghazal* that rhyme together.

**Maqta**: is the closing couplet of a *ghazal*. Poets generally use their pen names in it.

**Maulvi**: is an honorific Islamic religious title given to Muslim religious scholars. It generally means highly qualified Islamic scholar.

**Naat**: is a kind of encomium, a poetry that specifically praises the Islamic prophet Muhammad (SAW). The practice is popular in South Asia and the people who recite Naat are known as *Naat Khawan*

**Naabad**: a special sugar candy made by boiling sugar and water together and left for settling in an earthen pot.

**Nagirai**: is the name of the hero of Kashmiri folk-tale *Heemal Nagiray* the snake prince from the netherworld who had fallen in love with Heemal.

**Pir**: a holy man.

**Pechen**: Uncle's wife.

**Peter**: father's brother.

**Petreni**: a jealous and ill-wishing woman.

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**Poph**: father's sister.

**Pophuw**: father's sister's husband.

**Qand**: sugar loaf.

**Rangur**: dyer

**Razmia Mathnavi**: is a long narrative poem dealing with adventure, war or astonishing deeds of valour and adventure.

**Riste**: round minced meat ball.

**Rouf**: in Kashmiri refers to a special group dance performed by female folk on certain special social occasions and has no lexical equivalent in English.

**Sarv**: Cypress

**Shamshad**: The box-tree.

**Shrake-puch gaard**: small knife fish.

**Shrukh**: consists of a four-line quatrain many of which are mostly didactic in content and exhortative in tone. Nund Reshi used the shrukh form to speak about the transitoriness of life and the ephemeral nature of mundane pleasures.

**Tames gaye koker**: meaning he felt helpless and belittled.

**Tasavuf**: is a branch of Islamic knowledge which focuses on the spiritual development of the Muslim.

**Tuler**: honey bee.

**Vaakh**: is generally a four-line quatrain, thematically complete and independent in itself, a sententious gnomic verse, mystical or didactic.

**Vatsun**: is a short poem, mostly consisting of three lines having the same rhyme followed by a refrain. Traditionally, a vatsun is an expression of a woman's varied feelings. Each vatsun is a single entity having an emotional continuity.

**Wanvun**: is a distinct form of group singing performed by Kashmiri

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female-folk on certain special happy occasions such as a marriage or Eid.

**Yaajooj Maajooj**: a strange group of Lilliput-like beings in the myth related to the beautiful fairies found behind the Caucassian Mountain trying in vain to reach the fairies by means of their licking up the mountain.

**Yahoo**: a term having religious overtones for the Muslim community (a term which the community uses at times while invoking God's help).

**Yemberzal**: Narcissus.

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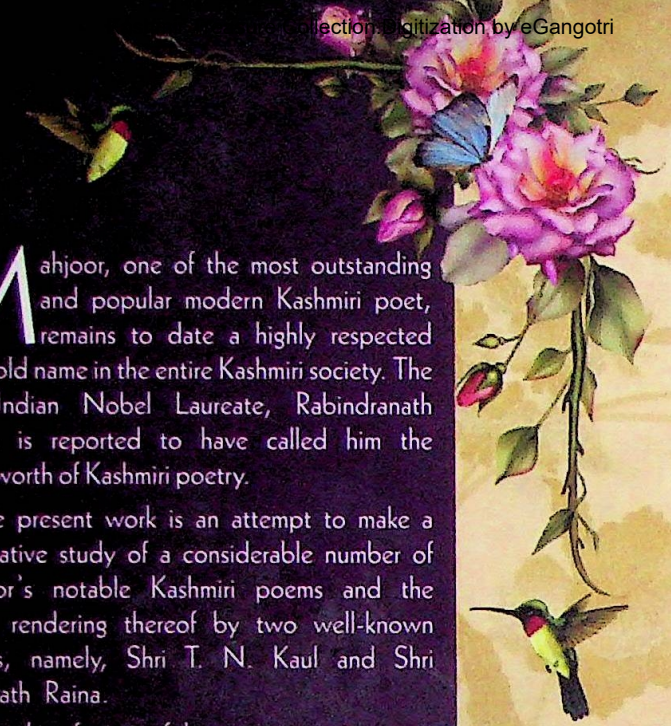

Mahjoor, one of the most outstanding and popular modern Kashmiri poet, remains to date a highly respected household name in the entire Kashmiri society. The great Indian Nobel Laureate, Rabindranath Tagore, is reported to have called him the Wordsworth of Kashmiri poetry.

The present work is an attempt to make a comparative study of a considerable number of Mahjoor's notable Kashmiri poems and the English rendering thereof by two well-known scholars, namely, Shri T. N. Kaul and Shri Trilokinath Raina.

A striking feature of the poetry in point, apart from its aesthetic charm, is the fact that it is deeply embedded in the Kashmiri people's particular modes of life and their distinct culture and history. Evidently, translation of such poetry is bound to come across difficulties born of the social and literary distinctions peculiar to the Kashmiri and English languages.

Herein, each poem selected is dealt with under three separate analytical headings: thematic, structural and comparative. Effort has also been made to mark the fidelity or freedom exercised by the two translators while presenting a Kashmiri poet to an English–knowing readership.

Besides, the author has tried to evaluate the English versions in question as pieces of creative writing as they stand in themselves.